

My Guardian

by LoLsterz

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Summary: Jack and Hiccup met as kids, shared a tender moment before Hiccup had to leave. Ten years since then, they find each other again and what they started back then they will continue now. [Based off a work of Kitty-Allie-Cat. Also for HiJack revolution]

## 1. My Guardian Kiss

**\*\*Author's Note:** Okay, I don't usually like the name Haley for Hiccup and I'm not gonna flame anyone who does, but for this story it works. I got the idea from a fic I used to read on the Digimon category and credit goes to originally Kitty-Allie-Cat for the plotline. I decided to do this cause my good friend Paoshirou Hozomi who I haven't seen personally in awhile really loved the story and she loves HiJack so I did this for her. Enjoy.\*\*

**\*\*Disclaimer:** I don't own anything.\*\*

**\*\*My Guardian\*\***

**\*\*Chapter One\*\***

**\*\*My Guardian Kiss\*\***

His emerald eyes were sullen, not shining and maybe even angry. Something he never associated with his loving, caring parents. Too caring, too loving, the tiny auburnette thought with a green-eyed glance their way. His \_"too loving, too caring"\_ parents were busy at the moment. His home was packed in boxes and covered in sheets, winding its way down the porch into the slowly filling, hungry van below. His home, reduced to so much as a giant-sized mail. He gave the van that was currently swallowing his living room's couch an angry glare.

"Haley, please, why don't you go into the living room, now? The

movers won't be going in there anymore and I won't have to keep such a close eye on you. You know mommy is busy, right?" Valerie Karmen, otherwise known as Valka, plaintively suggested. She knew how much he didn't want to go away from home.

Away from his Haley-sized bed in his Haley-sized room, with its bright happy window where he could watch his favorite park.

Haley frowned at her as he remembered the window he would be leaving behind. He gripped the metal rails of the stairway's railing and shook his head. His small legs were stuck through the rails and his little feet clad in furry slippers on the sides were swinging over the floors below. It was always cold outside in Burgess so they had to do all they can to keep warm. His small form was wearing a pair of dark brown shorts and his elbow-sleeved sweater was the same green as his eyes, if only a little darker.

Valka pushed back her light brown braided hair and reached forward to give him a hug.

"I know how much you don't want to go, my babe, I know you must be so angry at me and your daddy."

Haley's emerald eyes gave her a startled glance. "I'm nevew angry, mommy." he protested. \_How could she know?\_

A small smile graced her face. "I know, love. Mommy knows everything and this Mommy knows you're angry. You love it here, even though you're always so sick." She kissed his forehead. "But you are ill and that's why we have to leave. In a small town like Berk, you may get better, honey. We all want you to get better so you can go to the park one day."

Haley was born too small than any of them had expected. The man of the house, Stanley Horrendous Haddock, otherwise known as Stoick, or \_Stoick the Vast\_ by his subordinates, came down from a family of Vikings. And the men in their side of the family were always known to grow big and rather robust. Haley, however, is a bit of an odd ball and on top of being small, he was also sickly,

Haley's eyes looked away again, flat and carefully empty. \_Such a smart little boy.\_ Valka thought sadly and fondly.

"I know, mommy." He continued to sit on the stairway.

She kissed his brownlocks and rose. "Just stay put, okay? We'll be done soon."

Haley winced at her words. He didn't want them to be done soon. He didn't want them done at all! Valka was right, he always was ill. Always sick. Ever since he could remember, all he could do was stare out his special window to the world outside. Sometimes, when he was well enough, his parents would let him walk with them to the grocery store or go to day camp with other little boys and girls his age. He was a sick boy, though, and they were all scared of him there, and the way he could read books their day camp-sitter didn't read and use words that confused their day camp-sitter, too.

What he wanted to do the most, however, was go to the park that he could see through his window. To that world where children his age

laughed and wrestled with their parents. To that world where they rode a wooden vehicle and ran around without clutching their chests in pain and almost forgetting how to breathe. He wanted to play.

He turned a little bit and watched his anxious, intimidating, but still very loving father hover around the bulky moving men carrying the wooden hutch with pretty glass windows. His mother was telling the driver how to get to their other house far, far away. The anger, so unfamiliar and strange, swelled up in him once again. He didn't care that he was a sick little boy anymore.

He shimmied away from the stairway railing and got to his feet. His mouth was a little dry, so he swallowed and wet his mouth with saliva. He'd never disobeyed before. He loved his parents and they loved him, too. It wasn't their fault he was too sick to go play. They just wanted him to be well. They were good parents. He was a good boy, too, until now. He turned and ran for the open backdoor. His parents were busy and he was a good boy-they never saw his awkward run down the streets and towards the world in his window.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Haley stopped running when he reached the green park. Other children were in there. Adults and animals and babies that couldn't even walk were scattered throughout the large park. Everywhere was green, dark green from the shadows of trees, or bright green from the sunlight filling the air and the ground also covered with little patches of snow since spring was approaching in a few more weeks. He took a step onto the slight snow-covered green grass and smiled.

\_Finawy!\_ He thought triumphantly.

Haley looked around and saw two other children, one of them a boy with snow-white hair and a silver-blond girl. Haley walked forward. He was normally a shy, introverted young boy. If he wasn't going to be a good boy today, though, he shouldn't be shy or introverted, either. They look nice, and that boy with the white hair is holding a brown vehicle!

\_I've seen him here before!\_

Suddenly, the brunette's breath was coming in painful little gasps and gulps, and his hand clutched his shirt over his chest tightly. His lungs were straining from his recent run, unused to so much exercise. Sweat ran down his temples and the boy with snow-white hair and the brown vehicle began to get fuzzy. He bit his lip to keep from crying.

\_I just want to play! I don't want to be sick! \_His legs buckled and he fell down.

"Heeeey!" The ground echoed with the thuds of feet beneath Haley's ear. "you all right kid?" asked an anxious voice.

Haley's green eyes fluttered open and met big, icy-blue eyes, despite the description, looking into them felt warm, there were grass stuck up his nose, his neck was bent in a funny way, and his breath was still coming out in little puffs.

"I-hic-I-okay..." Haley lied, hiccoughing as he still struggled for

air. He realized he just lied and tried to push himself up. "I'm sowwy, I lied. I am not awlight."

"Hey! Don't do that! Stop it!" The snow-white haired boy reached forward and stopped Haley's weak attempts at rising. He pulled Haley up himself and held him up in a sitting position.

"Thank you vewy much." Haley smiled.

"No problem!" The other boy grinned a big, wide smile with lots of white teeth. Everything about the boy seemed white; his hair, his teeth, his skin. He wore a large blue hoodie with a \_'G' \_at the middle. His shorts were blue, too, and his white sneakers were beat-up and dirty.

But because of the white-ness, Haley just had to ask in between hicoughs. "Aw-hic-you Snow-White?" he cocked his head. "whewe awe youw Seven Dwafs?"

"I'm not Snow-White, that's a Disney Princess, and I'm a boy silly!" There was a snicker and a poke to Haley's nose. "so silly."

"Jack?" called a girl's voice.

The two boys turned to see the other child walk towards them. She had silver-blond locks tied up high to a braid and her glimmering blue eyes cast to them. Her skin was almost as pale as the boy's but the boy still won hands down on being pale, she wore a purple long-sleeve dress with knee-high boots as oppose to the boy who was just barefooted. She also had gloves on, unlike the boy.

"Elsa, I found somebody. What's your name? My name's Jack."

"My name is Haley-Hic-Horrendous-Hic-Haddock." Haley answered his breathing finally deeper, slower.

"That's too long" Jack frowned.

"Jack, your mom's calling us for lunch!"

"Lunch? All right!" Jack threw the arm not holding Haley up into the air and grinned again. "Hey, you wanna come, Hiccup?"

"Hiccup?"

"Because you keep doing-" he paused as Haley coughed out another \_\*\*hic. \*\*\_"That!" Jack snickered, but not unkindly. "Come on, my mom makes funny-tasting food, but there's always candy at the end of lunch."

"Candy?"

"Yeah! Come on!" He rose, tugging Haley-now-called-Hiccup up.

"Can we play with the brown thing, too?" Haley-Hiccup asked eagerly.

"You mean my sled?" Jack asked picking up the sled he had dropped to help out Haley-Hiccup.

"Yes!"

"Cool! Sure, Hiccup."

"All right, I'll come for lunch."

Jack led him excitedly to the picnic area where a young mother and two smaller girls sat. "Mom, can my new friend eat with us?" Jack asked animatedly.

The young woman with brown locks tied up in a bun gave Haley-Hiccup a startled glance. Haley-Hiccup grabbed Jack's hand. "Hello, what's your name?"

The auburnette met the young woman's kind eyes. "Hiccup, my name is Hiccup." \*\*Hiccup\*\* told the older woman.

Jack beamed.

"It's nice to meet you, Hiccup. But where are your parents?" The woman glanced around the park with a slight frown on her face.

"They awe allowing a famished vehicle to devouw my fuwnituw."

The woman gave him a blank look. "How old are you?"

"Five."

"Really?" Yet another adult's face filled with disbelief at Hiccup's answer.

He nodded mutely.

"Mooom, I'm hungry!" Jack whined, thankfully entering them.

Hiccup smiled up at the taller boy in relief.

"Well, you're not eating. You ran off without playing with Emma, and that wasn't very nice of you." His mother admonished. She looked as if she was about to start in on him, her confusion and concern set aside for the moment.

"I'll play with her now." Jack interrupted. "Hiccup is sick like Emma, so we can all play together. He wanted to ride the sled, too. Come on, Ems, let's go play." His free hand reached for his sister, whom smiled happily. She wore a pink corduroy jumpsuit and a white long-sleeved sweater.

"Since you and Hiccup aren't really up for too much moving, we'll just push the sled up while you guys ride it." Jack settled the younger ones down the flat board.

"Jack, since when were you so generous?" Elsa asked, confused, holding her own sister's hand.

"I always do anything for fun." Jack grins. "And I want lunch and Hiccup's sounds like he never rode before." Jack met Hiccup's gaze and smiled. "You're gonna havta let go, Hiccup." Their hands

separated and Jack started to pull the sled up hill.

Elsa placed her sister to their own sled and followed Jack hurriedly.  
"Ready Anna?"

As soon as everyone was on the top, Jack and Elsa got on their place. Jack settled down with Hiccup and Emma, while Elsa joined her sister. On the count of three, they gave a push and all of them squealed in delight as they made the trip down. Hiccup still laughing hard when they reached the ground, Jack smiled.

"Wasn't that fun?"

"Again, again!"

A while later, they were called back to the picnic blanket and sat down to eat. Hiccup was so happy, he didn't even mind lunch wasn't half as good as his Valka's and ate all that was given to him.

At the end, Jack happily tore open a medium-sized circular foil package and took a bite. Hiccup stared at his own wrapped pastry that reminded him vaguely of something he saw on bakeries.

"Cookies?" Hiccup read aloud amazed.

"Yup! You've never tried it?" Jack replied astounded.

"I've never had chocolate or candy. My mommy and daddy only let's me have fruit snacks and fruit yogurts for dessert. They are always very anxious about my health." Hiccup explained.

"If your parents don't allow you to have chocolate, I'm afraid I can't let you, either. I do have some red gelatin somewhere, though." The woman took the cookie away and fished through the basket.

"Hiccup." Jack whispered.

Hiccup turned and blinked as something touched his lips.

Jack held a small piece of white-frosted cookie with a snowflake design in his fingers and held it to Hiccup's lips. Jack pressed another finger to his own lips for silence and winked. Hiccup opened his mouth and the piece of cookie fell onto his tongue. His mouth closed and he let the taste linger in his mouth. Jack watched as Hiccup's green eyes lit up and his mouth curved into a delighted smile. He chewed slowly, his eyes closing as he savored the candy he never tasted before.

"Haley! Haley, where are you?" A distant voice called worriedly.

"I think my mommy is calling." Hiccup murmured lowly.

"Hm?" Jack's mother looked up and then turned to the couple walking quickly through the park, asking people questions and calling out a name. "Are those your parents?"

Hiccup nodded. The woman rose and quickly walked to the Haddock's.

"Are you going home now?" Jack asked sadly.

"Yeah... Will you come back hewe tomowow?"

"Yes. Me'n Elsa come almost every day! There are others too usually but they're out of town."

"Then, I'll come back tomowow at lunch twime with my own lunch fwom home." Hiccup promised.

"And I'll come with my sled and," Jack leaned forward and whispered into Hiccup's ear, "a frosted-snowflake cookie just for you." He slipped his half-finished cookie into Hiccup's hands and the auburnette stuffed it in his pocket. They smiled at each other and Hiccup rose to his feet.

"Thank you very much!" Hiccup called, jogging over to his parents.

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Hiccup glared at his feet, standing in the middle of his empty room. For the second time in two days, he wrestled with the unfamiliar feeling of anger. In his hand, he held the half-melted, half-eaten, soiled and crumbly cookie.

They were going away today. He couldn't believe he hadn't realized that! Of course they would leave today; they didn't even have beds anymore! Last night they slept on futons that would easily fit rolled up in the back of their car.

He had promised Jack! He would be breaking his promise if he didn't go to the park at lunchtime and his parents wanted to leave right after lunch! He distantly heard his mother making lunch and his father taking their suitcases down to the car. It wasn't fair! His first friend and Jack was going to think he ditched him!

Hiccup clenched his fists and sniffed, holding back tears. He didn't want to leave Jack. He liked Jack. Jack didn't think he was weird, or scary for being sick. In fact, he was used to sick little kids like his sister, Emma. Where would he ever find a friend like Jack or another friend at all? He brought the cookies to his mouth and ate it whole.

Jack promised to give him one of his own. Hiccup rubbed at his eyes and walked out of his room.

He looked into the kitchen and saw his mother stirring their soup and tossing vegetables in a pan.

"Mothew?" His voice came out kind of weak. He tried again.  
"Mothew?"

"Haley, we're not angry at you anymore, it's okay to call me mommy." She smiled fondly at him over her shoulder. "Just don't run away again."

"Mommy! I'm sowwy for scawing you. Can I go downstaiws and help out daddy?"

"Of course, hurry up, lunch is almost ready."

"Yes!"

Hiccup walked out onto the porch and saw his father's retreating back. He turned and ran down the opposite way and raced towards the park once again. He would apologize later for lying. Besides, he didn't promise yet. He would promise when he came back.

As he stood, gasping, at the picnic area awhile later, he looked around wildly. Nowhere did he see the snow-white haired boy.

"Jack! Jack? Jack!" Tears began filling his eyes and his already gasping lungs became more constricted. "He's not hewe... he didn't come." He fell to his bottom and the tears fell fast and thick to his pyjama shirt. Snot began to run and his sobs became louder. "It's-hic-not faiw!" He wailed. He rubbed at his eyes and sobbed.

"Hiccup? Hiccup! Hiccup, are you all right? Did you fall down again?" Jack's voice asked. Hiccup looked through blurry eyes as Jack crouched next to him.

"I thought I would nevew see you again, Jack! I thought you wewen't here. I couldn't find you." Hiccup sobbed.

"Oi, it's all right, I'm here now." The seven-year-old immediately wrapped his arms around the smaller boy and squeezed him tightly. "Come on, stop crying, you can't breathe, Hiccup."

Hiccup took deep gulps of air and wrapped his own arms around Jack's waist.

"Thank you vewy much."

"What are friends for?" Jack grinned. Hiccup pulled tissue out of his pocket- something his mother insisted on- and blew his nose. "Why'd you think you'd never see me again?"

"I'm going away!" He wailed. "I'm so sick my pawents awe moving to a small town faw away to help me get bwetter. I might nevew come back!"

"Hey! Why are they doing that? Emma's just as sick!" Jack frowned angrily. "Hiccup, don't cry again! Remember you can't breathe."

Hiccup nodded, biting his lip and crying to keep more tears at bay. "I wanted to say thank you, Jack. I ate the cookie you gave me yestewdway this mowning." Hiccup told Jack with a blush. "I wanted to save it, but I got angwy and sad because my pawents told me we wewe leaving today and I ate it."

"You're leaving today?"

"Yes."

"I almost didn't come today." Jack whispered. "My sister got really sick this morning and my mom told me to stay home. I'm glad I sneaked out, but I have to go back really soon."



"Me, too. Aftew lunch we're leaving."

"All right." Jack pulled Hiccp up to his feet and held up an extended pinkie. "Pinkie promise you'll come back."

"What?" Hiccup rubbed at his eye with one of his fists, staring up at Jack in confusion.

"Pinkie promise to come back to Burgess when you're grown up." Jack ordered again, his own eyes kind of shiny. "I want to be friends with you, too, Hiccup."

Hiccup held out his own pinkie. "Will you pwomise to remember me and play mow games in the snow, not just sledding, with me?"

"Yes. I promise."

"Then, I pwomise to come back." Their pinkies linked and bobbed up and down. Tears fell down both their cheeks. "I don't wanna go. You've my best fwend, Jack."

"I don't want you to go, either." Jack sniffed. Suddenly, he smiled. "I almost forgot, but here! I remembered just before I left. It's why I came today even though my mom told me not to." He pulled a foil-wrapped circular thing that could only be a cookie out of his pocket.

"Th-Thank y-you very much." Hiccup stuttered. "Can I kiss you?"

"What? Why?" Jack head tilted to one side.

"Whenevew my mommy weally likes a pwesent I give hew, she kisses me. She says it's because she's so happy. I'm weally happy wight now. Well, I'm weally sad, but I'm weally happy that you wemembewed." Hiccup smiled. "I've nevew had a fwend befowe and I've nevew had chocolate. And now I have both. A kiss seems like the wight thing to do." he rubbed at his eyes quickly.

"My parents do that, right." Jack grinned. "I've nevew kissed anyone, but my parents or Emma."

"Me, too. I pwomise you won't get sick."

"I know that. Okay." Jack leaned forward.

Hiccup tilted back his head because Jack was taller and tilted his head a bit to side so their noses wouldn't get in the way. Lips pressed together and their eyes closed, vaguely remembering that's what parents do.

Jack tasted chocolate and frosting on the boy's lips. Hiccup could have sworn he tasted happiness, if happiness had a taste, that is. They moved away, eyes fluttering open. Both were blushing without knowing why.

"Good bye, Jack." Hiccup mumbled his voice thick.

"Uh, bye, Hic." Jack echoed back, confusedly.

Hiccup started to go and then ran back. "I love you, Jack." Hiccup forced out.

Jack blinked, blue eyes still perplexed. "Eh?"

"Good bye!" Hiccup ran towards home.

"HICCUP!" Jack shouted. The tiny auburnette boy continued to run, tears streaming down his pale cheeks. He didn't think he could go home if he stopped to see his only friend one last time. "HICCUP!" Jack screamed again, tears streaming down his own face. "I don't want you to go." Jack whimpered.

**\*\*Author's Note: Don't worry, for those of you who might've read Chocolate Covered, a Digimon Taishirou fanfic. I'm not totally copying the whole thing. Probably just the first few chaps.\*\***

## 2. My Guardian Memories

**\*\*Author's Note: Thank you for the reviews! Please keep dropping them in. Pardon the OOC but hey it is fanfiction, peeps here can afford a lil bit of that every now and then.\*\***

**\*\*So pairings... There will be a lot of shiftings, but the official are:\*\***

**\*\*Jack and Hiccup\*\***

**\*\*Jamie and Emma\*\***

**\*\*Aster and Elsa (What? I like the idea)\*\***

**\*\*Cristoff and Anna\*\***

**\*\*Jim and Dimitri\*\***

**\*\*Eret and Astrid\*\***

**\*\*Ben and A. Lupe (Minor pairing. Lupe, fyi, is the ANDROID Ben doesn't remember dancing with at the movie. Here, I'm making the A stand for Anya. Yeah, I went there)\*\***

**\*\*Other pairings that will show up at some points:\*\***

**\*\*Jack and Elsa\*\***

**\*\*Hiccup and Anna\*\***

**\*\*Eret and Emma\*\***

**\*\*Jamie and Astrid\*\***

**\*\*Dimitri and Emma (hinted/assumed but not really a pairing)\*\***

**\*\*Jim and Ben (one-sided only)\*\***

**\*\*Dimitri and A. Lupe (mentioned to be an -ex couple)\*\***

**\*\*Disclaimer: I own nothing\*\***

**\*\*My Guardian\*\***

**\*\*Chapter Two\*\***

**\*\*My Guardian Memories\*\***

A young petite auburnette teenager, around fourteen and a half years of age, stood at the prow of a fast moving ship. A few other passengers wandered aimlessly behind him, but he ignored them. All that mattered was that he was leaving the small island growing smaller by the minute, Berk. He was finally returning to Burgess, his destination and the home of a fast-fading memory.

Finally, he was going back. He was going back home. It didn't matter that the small town of Berk was where he had been leaving these past ten years. All that mattered was that in Burgess he found he first friend and his first love, a little boy with snow-white hair, icy blue eyes, and a infectious grin.

**\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\***

A young man with white hair, icy eyes, and a big grin made a hard turn and he with his two other team mates were the first to the finish line of the toboggan race. Usually, the sport was riding bobsleds but for the competition held in Montreal this year, as an anniversary to the sport, the Burgess Winter Sports team (which involved skiing, snowboarding, and the like) was selected with three other schools to have an opening presentation riding toboggan, the origin of the sport bobsledding.

Excited and triumphant, he ran to the edge of the field where a teenage girl with silver-blond locks and glimmering blue eyes stood next to a young girl with long brown hair, and brown eyes. Elsa and Emma.

"Jack, you were great!" Emma exclaimed.

"That was a great race, Jack." Elsa agreed. "I have to get to the shop now. Mom and Anna is already going to pitch a fit with me being so late." Elsa lifted up her face and kissed Jack on the mouth lightly.

He jumped a bit and Elsa pulled away. As Elsa left, Jack turned to meet his sister's knowing gaze.

A confusion as to how the two were siblings for contrasting eye, hair, and skin color. Jack had snow-white hair and icy blue eyes, a trait mostly from his father's side, earning himself the title \_Jack Frost \_from his team and coach. Like his father also, Jack was an albino, meaning he had a pale complexion. Living at Burgess didn't help in getting him a tan over the summer, either. Emma mostly took from their mother's side. After getting over being sickly, her complexion became a bit tanner. She had brown eyes and straight brown locks, usually hanging freely down her back. Jack sighed at his sister's expression.

"Shut up."

Emma smirked. "I didn't say anything yet, Jack." she drawled. "but you really should tell Elsa."

Elsa didn't know Jack had already kissed somebody, a long time ago. She didn't know that I love you had been stuck on his tongue for ten years. She didn't know that the person who hadn't heard it was a memory from a long time ago, a memory named Hailey. A memory with a chocolate frosted kiss. Along with the desire to protect this Hailey.

A desire to be a protector, a defender. A Guardian.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Haley Horrendous Haddock, fourteen years old, with shaggy auburn locks slowly darkening to eventual brown, with small braids tied close to his sideburns, lifted his face to the wind and smiled. The sea spray dampened his skin lightly and dried instantly, leaving flakes of salt on his freckled skin. His shirt with green sleeves, a white front whipped around his thin frame and his long brown pants molded against his legs and flapped around his ankles.

"Haley!"

Haley turned, his emerald eyes glistening in the bright sun.

"Yes?" Haley replied as his mother walked closer.

Valka's yellowish cloak danced and flared with the rushing wind along with her hair and she chuckled lightly as she tried to keep it down.

"I feel like that American super model, Ma-ri-ri-an." Valka joked, holding down her cloak's lower ends.

"Marilyn Monroe, mom." Haley smiled. His mother smiled back. After all these years, he and his mother were still close, and he still believed her the most beautiful woman in the world, with or without Marilyn Monroes. "What did you need, mom?"

"I miss it when you used to call me mommy." She wrapped her arms around her teenage son and breathed deep his salty, warm hair. "Your father's trying to keep Toothless tamed down below deck, seems like he's disturbing the peace. Thought you should help him out, you know. I think he still feels bad for that accident five years ago."

Haley groaned, looking down at his left leg, his brown pants perfectly concealing a metal leg. "We've been over this. I forgave him for that, what matters now is that he's supportive of me being gay." he frowned, wondering why his father can't just get over it. It didn't even hurt anymore when he walked with a prosthetic.

'We're almost to your future and we'll have to leave you behind soon when we go back to Berk." Valka whispered. "better make put his mind at peace before then, Haley." she embraced him.

Haley returned her hug. "Okay," he whispered back. "I'll still just be a phone call away, though, mom. I'll see you every break I can

get, too. Burgess will be lonely without you there for Christmas." he assured her, leaning back.

"Yes, you're right." His mother pulled away and wiped a tear away from her eye. "I do miss that town, but you're father wouldn't be able to leave his company for us to move back with you. He all ready uprooted the company once with him when we went to Berk, he can't do it again this close to retirement."

"Yeah, hopefully I'll be ready to take over before then." Haley turned once again to the rapidly nearing port, "Okay, I'll go see him now."

Haley left his mother and proceeded to mind a flight of stairs that would bring him below deck. He went to the cabin they were currently in, and behind the door he could already hear his lab's barks and pushed the door open. Stoick raised his head, opening his mouth to apologize to another complaining passenger or official when he saw it was his son.

"Hey dad," Haley greeted and the collar around Toothless's neck finally loosened up and the lab bounded towards the teen. "Toothless! No, no, no, no, no, no-Ack!"

Stoick jumped up. "Ah, ya blasted devil." he went towards his son and helped him get the dog off. "you all right son?"

"Yeah, 'm used to it anyways." Haley sat up, stroking the dog behind the ears before moving his hand down to the chin, making the dog promptly collapse, asleep. "did he cause too much trouble?"

Stoick sighed, rubbing his forehead. "He kept barking up a storm, but at least he didn't leave a stinkbomb anywhere." he shrugged.

Haley nodded, getting up to find his furry boots. He remembered Burgess having as much snow as Berk, and decided sneakers weren't going to keep his feet-well, foot-warm. Haley found them and sat on a couch. He took off his sneaker from his right foot easily but had to ease out his prosthetic from the sneaker on his left that was secured into the footwear due to a styrofoam inside.

"I'm really sorry about that, son."

Haley smiled tightly, trying not to be exasperated. "Dad, it's been five years. It's okay, seriously. I'm not mad at you, wasn't even back then." he assured. "Just... I'm happy you came around, and didn't, you know, disown me. Compared to that, losing a foot is nothing."

"I could never disown you, son." Stoick huffed, managing a short smile. "So 're ya excited about going to Burgess Academical Institute?"

"I can't wait!" Haley exclaimed. His emerald eyes shined. "I worked so hard to get accepted into their Two-Course Program. I'll be able to compromise taking up Engineering and Business management!" "

It was a bit of a conflict then, since Haley liked designing and inventing, he had a dream to take up Engineering and even moreso after the accident. He wanted to design prosthetics to be more

comfortable, not that the ones he had were terrible but he thought there could always be some adjustments and improvements. But with his father running a company, he had to take over as well so they don't lose their benefits and such. Burgess Academical Institute offers its students a program that enables them to take up two courses simultaneously.

"You can't wait to find your dream boy, too, I gather?" Stoick said knowingly.

Haley blinked. "You... Actually heard me that time?" he asked.

"Yes. I just said it. I listen," Stoick pointed out. "So, still can't remember his name?"

"No... I just remember it was fairly short" Haley smiled fondly, remembering the brown fingers holding a piece of chocolate snowflake-frosted cookie to his lips. "I still remember my first taste of chocolate and frosting, though, and his bright, happy grin. I'm sure there's no one else in the world with a grin like that."

"Everyone believes there's no one else like the one they love." Stoick agreed absently, remembering how before they had Haley, Valka had to leave Stoick until the man could prove his worth to her father, Haley's grandfather who he called Old Wrinkly. "You would do anything for them."

Haley nodded, looking out the small window, seeing how they were about to reach the docks. "Just an hour until I'm near you..."

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Jackson Overland, sixteen years old (though in three hours seventeen years old), leaned forward as the hot water beat into his tired muscles. The adrenaline rush from practice was fading fast and the confusion that had been bugging him lately crept back into his mind.

\_Why can't I fall in love with Elsa? I've known her for over almost seventeen years!\_ He groaned. \_She's pretty, popular and she loves the snow like me! Life would be so much simpler if I could just stop loving a stupid memory! I mean, I probably made up that Hailey-kid, whoever she is. Elsa doesn't remember any Hailey!\_

Jack lifted his face to the stream of water as the memory of chocolate and frost tasting lips crept into his mind. Lips that weren't Elsa's.

\_They were softer, a little thinner, and were wet with salt?\_  
\_Yeah... Hailey was crying because she had to go away.\_

\_\*\*"Pinkie promise to come back to Burgess when you're grown up."\*\*\_

\_\*\*"Will you promise to remember me and play snow games in the snow, not just sledding, with me?"\*\*\_

\_\*\*"Yes. I promise."\*\*\_

\_\*\*"Then, I pwomise to come back." Their pinkies linked and bobbed up and down. Tears fell down both their cheeks. "I don't wanna go. You've my best fwend, Jack."\*\*\_

\_\*\*"I don't want you to go, either."\*\*\_

Jack gripped his dripping hair in his fist and grimaced. \_I just want to forget! I don't want everything to be complicated anymore!\_

"Jack, your friends are all going to get here soon. Hurry up and get dressed!" A voice called through the door.

"YES!" Jack yelled back. He quickly finished washing his hair and turned off the water. His backside hit the tile behind him and he leaned back, closing his eyes tiredly. \_You promised to come back, Hailey.\_

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

"I promised to come back. I'm sorry it took so long, but here I am." Haley whispered as he stepped off the ship onto Burgess, absently patting Toothless's head. "You've probably already forgotten me." His smiled sadly.

"Haley! Come help me and your father with the luggage!" Valka called from the ship.

"Coming, mom." Haley called, winding his way back up the ramp through the small throng of passengers.

A few hours later, Haley sighed in relief as he closed the hotel room door behind him. He did love his parents, of course. Burgess, however, was right outside the hotel, and so was his chocolate frosted memory. He couldn't even wait to gear Toothless up to come along.

He raced outside, ignoring the glares of the other hotel patrons. The park was just a few blocks away.

He stopped at the entrance, huffing slightly. He might not be as ill and weak as he used to be, but running three blocks straight was a little tiring. His foot stepped hesitantly onto the pebbled park path peppered with snow. He walked slowly on the curving pebbled path, his emerald eyes drinking in the snow and white-covered slopes. As he walked, his memory slowly came back. His feet followed his memory off the path towards a patch of sunlit whites.

\_Here... Here is where we last met.\_ He raised his face to the sun, a pain-filled smile of his face.

\_\*\*"Pinkie promise to come back to Burgess when you're grown up."\*\*\_

\_\*\*"Will you pwomise to remember me and play mow games in the snow, not just sledding, with me?"\*\*\_

\_\*\*"Yes. I promise."\*\*\_

\_\*\*"Then, I pwomise to come back." Their pinkies linked and bobbed up

and down. Tears fell down both their cheeks. "I don't wanna go. You're my best friend, \_ \_ \_ \_."\*\*\_

\_\*\*"I don't want you to go, either."\*\*\_

He frowned as once again the name was denied him. "If only I could remember his name." He lowered his face and pulled a small oval sticker out of his pocket. It was the sticker with the brand name of the cookie that the little boy had given him over ten years before. "I bet he can't remember me, either."

"JACK! Jack, watch out!"

Haley looked up at the panicked shout. He managed to see a slender, silver-blond teenage girl running towards him. Then, a lean, muscled, white something entered his vision and knocked him to the ground. The white something fell on top of him, long legs tangled with his and a nose pressed against his forehead. A nose that leaked a hot, sticky fluid.

"Awr dyu vokay?" asked a worried voice thickly. (Are you okay?)

"Me? You're asking if I'm all right? You broke your nose on my frontal bone!" Haley exclaimed as he pushed the body off of him. He steadied the taller boy and immediately pressed a tissue against the bleeding nose.

"I do dis all da time." The boy assured him. Haley looked up and his breath stopped.

A boy with pale skin, icy blue eyes and snow-white hair was grinning a huge grin full of shiny white teeth. A grin that was achingly familiar. (I do this all the time)

"H-hello. My name is Haley Horrendous Haddock. What's yours?" The boy stuttered breathlessly.

"Jackson Overland." He made a confused face. "Haiwee? Your name's Haiwee?" (Hailey? Your name's Hailey?)

"Y-yes, uh, yeah, t-hat's without an 'i' by the way, Haley. H-a-l-e-y. Yes."

"Oh," The grin was back. "I can hold da dishyou to ma own nothe." He said around the soft paper. (I can hold the tissue to my own nose)

"Y-yes."

"Jack, are you all right, then?" Another boy came up to their side. "I'm sorry. That was my fault. I threw the frisbee too hard. Emmaaaaaa, your brother's okay! He slammed into a dude that carries around tissues!"

"My mother-" Haley forestalled his own explanation. It didn't matter. "anyway, may I ask how old you are?" he asked, helping Jackson Overland rise.

"I'm thevendeen doday." The broken nosed teen replied proudly. "I haven't then you 'wound her. You new?" (I'm seventeen today. I



haven't seen you around here. You new?)

"Um..." Haley frowned and thought hard before he answered. He wasn't sure he heard the question right. "I am new to Burgess in a way. I lived here as a toddler and just got back to go to school in Burgess Institute."

"Instwitute?" (Institute)

"Burgess Institute, yeah." Koushirou repeated.

"Hey! My name's Jamie Bennette. What's yours?"

"Oh, right!" Haley turned to the growing group and acknowledged them at last. "I'm Haley Horrendous Haddock. I am fourteen years old and I just moved back to town from Berk. I used to live here, ten years ago, actually."

"Ten?" asked a girl, the youngest of the bunch. She also looked familiar to Haley. She was obviously Jackson Overland's younger sister by the way she clinged to him. Her skin was a lighter shade of tan as opposed to her brother's, and her eyes were a light, enigmatic brown. She laid a hand on Jack's upper arm as if to hold herself up. The other guy, Jamie, had brown locks too, much darker than the girl's though, he looked down at her in confusion.

"Emma?" He questioned.

"Um... nothing." She smiled fondly up at him. "My name is Emma Overland. I'm Jackson's younger sister." She introduced herself to Haley turning back to face him.

"And my girlfriend," Jamie quipped proudly.

"Yeah." Emma smiled with a slight shake of her head.

Jackson Overland made a face. "That's stiw jebatawle." (That's still debatable)

"I'm Elsa Arendelle. This is Anna, my sister." The silver blond-locks teenager put in, coming forward with a brunette girl about her age. The girl smiled cutely at Haley, her light chestnut eyes glowing.

"The rest of us aren't so lucky to be having our seventeenth birthday like this frostbite idiot here. I'm fourteen and single." Anna said, holding out her hand. She was really cute, with soft full lips and a pert little nose. "I'll turn fifteen after christmas, actually. When's your birthday?"

Haley blinked at her a little confused. "Around Autumn." He looked back at Jackson Overland who was still holding the dampening tissue to his nose. "Here, I have another one." Haley reached into his pocket and pulled out his packet of tissues.

"Dank you!" Jack grinned. (thank you!)

Haley felt his throat catch. "I-I, uh, I was actually looking for someone" he stuttered. He didn't notice Emma's sharpened gaze. "I had a friend, a long time ago. I don't remember his name, but I remember

that he gave me-"

"Haley!"

He spun wildly, flustered and confused.

"There you are, honey. Oh, did you make friends?"

"We were just discussing that." Anna answered. "We just met him. Well, Jackson just slammed his nose into Haley's forehead, actually." She amended giggling.

"Oh, dear. Didn't I tell you tissues always came in handy?" She smiled down at her son.

He blushed vividly. "Yes, um, I was about to ask-"

"Sorry, dear, but your father needs to get some food into him and you know your orientation at Burgess Institute is in just a few hours. We really have to go."

"Oh, right... The Institute... right..."

"As in Burgess Academical Institute? But! You said you were fourteen!" exclaimed Elsa.

"Fifteen this Autumn... Oh, and I guess... I'm a genius." Haley answered absently, staring at Jackson Overland. "I have to go, as you heard. I would like you meet with you again. All of you, of course. May I have a number or something-"

"You can have mine! Here, we'll switch!" Anna excitedly pulled out her phone and flipped it open.

"Oh, um, my number..." He pulled his phone out of his other pocket and the two teens exchanged phone numbers.

"Maybe we should meet up after your orientation in the Institute." Anna suggested coyly.

"Yeah! That would be excellent." Haley exclaimed. "Will you all be able to come to over tomorrow after three pm? I'll call... Um... Anna right? as soon as I'm out of orientation and give directions to a coffee shop or something."

"Perfect." Anna agreed. "You guys up with that?"

"Yeah." Chorused the others, still shocked at his age and intelligence.

"I hope your nose is better tomorrow, then." Haley faced Jackson Overland.

He grinned again and gave him a thumbs-up. "No pwob!" (No Prob)

"See you!" Haley left with his mother, waving.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

"Haley, dear, you realize that cute girl was flirting with

you?"

"Don't be silly, mom." He replied vaguely, his thoughts still on that shocking grin. "I think I found him, mom. Jackson Overland... Jackson... Jack? Maybe... his name was Jack..."

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

"Wasn't he just adorable, you guys? Those green eyes! And his hair, kinda like chocolate but the redness made it also look like strawberry... He looked like a strawberry shortcake with chocolate frosting instead of white! Oh, and his freckles could be like sprinkles."

"What? Boys aren't desserts, Anna." Elsa chuckled. "I don't think he realized you were flirting with him."

"Of course, not. He's a genius, remember? A College student at fourteen!-"

"And a half." Jamie interjected.

"He probably never had time for girls! I never dated someone like him! I'm sure with enough time he'll like me, too." Anna nodded.

"You sure are sure of yourself, Anna!" Jamie chuckled.

Emma slipped from under his arm and walked over to her brother. "Jack?" He looked down at her awkwardly, trying to keep his bleeding nose high in the air to stop the bleeding. "You heard what he said, didn't you?" she pressed.

"What?"

"He said he moved away over ten years ago and that he was looking for someone. He said he couldn't remember his name. Maybe he was Haley-"

"Don' be doopid! Haiwee wadn't a boy!" (Don't be stupid! Hailey wasn't a boy!)

"You don't remember that!" Emma hissed back.

"Sure I do." But Jack's eyes looked away.

"You just remember his name-"

"Her."

"His or her name and the kiss. Barely anything else. Maybe your mystery girl is really a boy and he finally came back like he promised and is looking for you and found you. He kept staring at you, Jack. He kept stuttering and staring and blushing. He didn't even really notice the rest of us." Emma pointed out. "I kept watching him. I noticed it."

"I juth' dammed indo 'is faith, Ewwa. Of courth he wath daring ad meh. An' pwobabwee wonderin' 'ow a blodhead lie meh dill had nothe lef' do bake seein ath I've done id tho of'en." Jack growled. (I just

slammed into his face, Emma. Of course he was staring at me. And probably wondering how a bonehead like me still had a nose left to break seeing as I've done it so often.)

Emma stared a minute, worked out what he said, and frowned. "Right." she frowned even more. "Just because Hailey may be a boy Haley doesn't mean anything. You shouldn't be afraid of your feelings, even if they may be homosexual. Look at Jamie, he's bisexual and he's completely comfortable with himself."

"I'm not gay." Jack stated flatly. (I'm not gay)

"Right now, you're not anything. The only person who ever affected you was Hailey-o-Haley. Who cares if it's a girl or boy," Emma snapped lowly. She returned to Jamie's side.

Jack frowned darkly. If anyone had looked, they would've looked up, too, wondering if maybe the sky had sent a cloud by that personally offended the young man. It wasn't the sky, however, that made his frown so dark, obviously. It was his sister's words.

And those emerald eyes that rang a bell somewhere deep inside him.

\_Is Hailey a boy? Is Haley Horrendous Haddock the Hailey from my memory? My chocolate covered memory girl... boy?\_

**\*\*Author's Notes:** Tobogganing, the sport of sliding down snow-covered slopes and artificial-ice-covered chutes on a runnerless sled called a toboggan. In Europe, small sleds with runners are also called toboggans. The toboggan is light in weight and will support a heavy load in soft snow. As a sport it probably originated on the slopes of Mount Royal in Montreal. During the late 1880s it spread to the US where it had considerable popularity until the early 1930s.\*\*

**\*\*If you want to know more, go to [www . britannica EBchecked / topic / 597801 / tobagganing](http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/597801/tobogganing)\*\***

**\*\*Read and Review please! Hi PAOSHIROU!\*\***

### 3. My Guardian Triangles

**\*\*Author's Note:** I was kinda saddened by the lack of reviews on the previous chap. The last chapter was pretty good too. But guess that's life so whatever. I hope more reviews will come as the story goes on. So just to be clear, I made Jamie younger than Jack and the same age group as Emma. They're around thirteen. Since in the movie they kinda looked alike, and there's a saying of the perfect couple looking like each other (although I think it's meant figuratively meant), I thought why not?\*\*

**\*\*My Guardian\*\***

**\*\*Chapter Three\*\***

**\*\*My Guardian Triangles\*\***

"Haley Horrendous Haddock?" a deep voice asked.

The diminutive auburnette turning brunette blinked and turned around, startled. "Sorry. I didn't realize you had been speaking to me. I'm Haley, yes." Haley nodded.

The older student smiled. "No problem, kiddo. Burgess Institute does take some getting used to. My name is Cristoff Reintroll and I am your orientation leader." The young man smiled and held out his hand.

Haley examined him as he reached out with his own hand.

Cristoff Reintroll had blond hair and light brown eyes hidden behind pesky bangs. His appearance was all right albeit plain. He might look more assuming if he had blue eyes that usually went well with blond hair. His hair was tucked in a winter cap, his clothes seemed perfect for the cold weather, a plain light blue sweater and simple jeans tucked in some boots.

"Come over here with the rest of the group and we'll get started." Cristoff smiled and motioned towards the room beside them.

"Yes."

Haley preceded Cristoff into the room and his eyes met a spring-like, green gaze. Another young man, older than himself, obviously, maybe even around the same age of Cristoff if not older, was sitting near the rear of the room, an open seat next to him. Many of the girls were glancing at him frequently and making twitching motions as if they longed to stand and sit next to the young but somehow mature-looking man.

The young man was handsome, even to Haley's untrained eye, but not the explosive type of handsome. His hair was grayish but artfully streaked with blue highlights, tied down in a semi-long ponytail and his bangs were placed nicely, shading the spring green gaze. His arms were well-toned, even this was obvious even underneath the sleeves. His body was long and lean and clad in form-fitting jeans and a rather baggy blue shirt. He wore a necklace that looked tribal, almost.

A long-fingered hand rose. The young man beckoned mutely to Haley and indicated the free seat next to him.

He makes arrogance look good. Haley thought, bemused. He walked over and sat down next to the young man.

"I'm E. Aster Bunnymund."

"My name is Haley Horrendous Haddock." Haley replied, cocking his head. "What's \_'E' \_stands for? Is it a middle Initial?"

Aster smirked. "Should be'n the middl' if it was, hm? Nah, Aster's my middle name. But I like it a whole lot better than my first time."

"Hello everyone! My name is Cristoff Reintroll." Cristoff suddenly greeted as he reached the front and opened a neat folder. "Here are some fliers and information about myself. Procedure and all that." He chuckled. "I hope that you will look to me for any questions you may

have for these two days of orientation, and even during your years here at Burgess Academical Institute while I am here as well. Now that my little bit is said, let's all get to know each other and go around the room introducing ourselves."

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

"I wonder if he's in orientation right now." Anna sighed, playing with a strand of her hair.

"Of course, he is." Elsa automatically answered. "Mom told me orientation lasts two days and the future students have to sleep in a dorm room for the night in between." She took a bite of chocolate cake.

"Hey! You're eating my name, Jamie!" Jack suddenly yelped.

"So? You didn't claim it!"

"My name's on it!"

"Yeah, well, you didn't put it there." Jamie smirked, bringing another large bite into his mouth.

"GIVE ME BACK MY NAME!" Jack roared. He winced and touched his cottoned up nose.

His sister shook her head, thinking sometimes her brother never really grows up. "Don't shout, you'll just hurt yourself, Jack." Emma sighed. She plucked the cake out of Jamie's hands, kissed his frosting covered mouth to keep him from protesting and handed the plate to her brother. "Now, shut up."

Anna giggled and sipped her glass of milk. "Do you think he likes green?"

"Well," Emma replied promptly. "He did wear the color when we saw him."

"Yeah." Anna trailed off thoughtfully. "How about purple? Or maybe brown? His shoes were brown."

Jamie made a look. "You looked at his shoes?"

Anna shrugged and sniffed daintily. She reached for a small piece of cake doubtfully. "I don't think I should... I need to make a good impression. I don't want to get pimply or fat or anything..."

"Don't deny yourself chocolate before he asks you out, Anna!" Elsa chuckled.

"I think Anna will be doing the asking, not the other way around." Jamie put in. "That guy seemed kinda shy and... well... smart, not a guy to chase after a pretty girl. He's probably too into books for that stuff."

"Yeah," Anna sighed miserably and forked herself a bite of chocolate.

"Oh, great job, Jamie." Elsa snapped.

"Huh?"

"Never you mind, Jamie." Emma soothed, popping another piece of cake into his mouth.

Jack chewed his cake thoughtfully. \_Haley Horrendous Haddock...\_

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

"Jackson Overland." Haley repeated with puzzlement etched onto his face.

Aster scrunched up his nose. "I can't bloody believe it, really?"

"Yeah. Why? Do you know him?"

"Oh, yeah. A lil. My folks made me go to this camp, stuffs about hand-to-hand combat, when I was ten and I met him there. Met him in a parkour class, he painted my face red when it was nap time. Since then, we had a fist fight every other day and had to stare at each other for hours for punishment!" Aster rolled his eyes. "Pain in the arse, really. I'll never forget that stupid grin."

Haley smiled. \_What a small world.\_

"Did you two enjoy the introduction ceremony?" Cristoff asked, coming up behind them.

"No." They answered in duet.

Cristoff laughed. "I hate it, too. Why don't we sneak off to the coffee shop over there and get to know each other?"

"But you're an OL!" Haley exclaimed.

"Doesn't mean I don't have caffeine cravings every blessed hour. Coffee keeps you alive in college, first advice of the day." Cristoff warned seriously. "hot chocolate works too, but I go for coffee any day,"

"I believe ya. Y'know how much coffee I already suck down a day? Just a high school student and about three cups of hot coffee in the mornin' and an iced coffee whenever I pass a vendor, drink 'em more than Adam's ale." Aster agreed. He noticed their confusement and didn't wait for the question. "Water."

"Oh."

"How are you two so tall?" Haley complained good-naturedly. "I drink next to no caffeine and I'm still a hobbit-sized college freshman."

"Yeah, well, if all college freshmen were fourteen-"

"And a half."

"And a half, they'd be hobbit-sized, too." Cristoff joked. "maybe even troll-sized."

"Now that's a four year old-And a half."

The three laughed and ditched the crowd of freshmen going to the scheduled ceremony of School Value.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

"I hope your nose is next to normal tomorrow, Jack. I don't want to go to uptown with a friend with a nose the size of a blimp." Anna teased, poking his side and darting away.

"ANNA!" Jack grabbed at her as she hopped out the front door. She ran off, giggling and waving.

"She's so full of energy." Elsa said with a smile. "I have to go now, too, Jack. Need to finish some designs," She leaned towards him.

Jack leaned away and tapped his nose. "I smashed this on someone's frontal bone, remember?"

"Oh, yes." Elsa chuckled behind her hand. "See you guys tomorrow at the train station." She waved and left, closing the door behind her.

"Aren't you going home, too? Party's over." Jack pointed out to Jamie.

"So? My girlfriend lives here and we're going to go cuddle."

"Oh fanastic," Jack rolls his eyes and walks off the hallway towards his room.

Emma and Jamie laughed.

"What movie did you want to watch?" Emma asked after their giggles subsided.

"Something with violence and explosions!"

"Boys." She rolled her eyes. "I guess I better snag one from my brother's room before he locks the door."

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

"Thanks for the coffee, Reintroll."

"No problem, Haddock. With my student ID, it was almost free."

"That's right, the discount." Aster grinned. "You know commuting via train is pretty much free now because of that plastic card with your picture on it?"

"It's definitely awesome!" Cristoff thrusts his fist up into the air.

"It does make things rather easier, doesn't it?" Haley agreed, pocketing his own ID, newly made at the ID card stall.



"Are you two going to join clubs?"

"Nah. My band's a full-time gig, ya know? It's hard 'nuff fittin' in school. I have to start lookin' for a job now to pay my own bills and rent." Aster made a face. "And I have to find an apartment!" He groaned.

"Are you not from around here?" Haley asked sympathetically.

"Are you kiddin'? I have an aussie's blood but I was born in a hospital not two miles from here." Aster tells them. "My old man is just a prick! '\_You're a man, now, son. It's time to face the real world. Here's enough dough for your first month of rent, now beat it\_.'" Aster said in a mock-deep voice of his father. "Ol' prick."

"Ow." Cristoff winced. "My parents are letting me live with them until I am ready to leave." He blushed suddenly. "I'm already a third year and I still live with my parents, how sad. I keep wanting to get an apartment, but I haven't found anybody else to roommate with me."

Haley's eyes glimmered. "What about with me? And you too, Bunnymund?"

"What?"

"Huh?"

"Mate, I don't even got a place!"

"B-But..."

"It's a great idea. We all like each other and get along just fine." Haley pointed out. "Bunnymund needs a place almost immediately, Reintroll wants to get away from his parents, and I need people to help me with my rent whom I can rely on. I believe you two are perfect candidates."

"B-but, so soon?" Cristoff looks careful, "We just met today."

"We'll hang out for the rest of orientation and get to know each other some more. Tomorrow after orientation ends, you two can join me and meet some other new friends of mine and spend the whole day together." Haley shrugs. "If you two decide you'd rather not risk it we'll just exchange cell numbers and continue on in a more acquaintance-like manner. What do you say?"

"I think this idea is getting better and better. You already got a space?"

"It's just three train stations from the institute. My parents helped me locate it. It has three bedrooms, two bath, and right next to a park. We wanted it on the large size in the event I found a roommate or two. If I didn't, I would just downgrade within the complex." Haley told them.

Aster grinned. "That's great, mate. C'mon, Reintroll, whaddya

say?"

"I say this is moving a little fast. You two can go on ahead if you'd like, but I need a little more time to decide how trustworthy you two are. I would like to meet up with you two tomorrow, however." He smiled. "I haven't had such good friends since middle school. I'm sure with enough time I'd gladly join you two."

"That's awesome. I'm glad I didn't skip out on this junk." Aster laughed. "You guys can call me Aster, all right?"

Cristoff smirked. "How about 'E'?" he teased, earning a look from Aster. "Got it, got it. So Cristoff will do for me, too."

"Then, be free to call me Haley."

"A bit of a female-sounding, mate. We'll have to think of a nickname soon." Aster pointed out.

"Well, it's almost dinner time, and I'm hungry. Tomorrow you two will really need to stick with the orientation schedule, unlike today. Tomorrow you get your classes." Cristoff instructed them and led them towards the dining hall.

"Oh, right. That should be okay." Aster shrugged.

"Okay!" Haley grinned. "It's been great! I can't believe I found such great friends! I hope they don't just decide to go on with their lives before they meet me after tomorrow. It will be hard to find such nice people in the sea of them here in Burgess Institute. Though, the people I met earlier seem to be eager to be friends as well. It's all rather nice." Haley's mind begins to wander off. "I wonder if Jackson Overland is my memory boy."

"Oy, anklebiter, hurry up! You're going to get knocked back to end of the line." Aster called out.

Haley shook his head and hurried after them.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Jack lay back on his bed on the bottom bunk. Emma got her own room awhile back, a former guest room, but their Uncle and Aunt, now dad and mom, kept the bunk bed instead of buying new ones for them. He shifted restlessly, trying to get comfortable on a bed that was now too short.

"Maybe I should get a job and save up to buy a new bed. North and Thiana keeps frowning whenever I ask for allowance. Their budget must be getting tighter." He sighed discontentedly. "Stupid money."

He stretched out his legs and braced his feet against the bottom of the top bunk. He glared angrily at his toes.

"Hiccup... That's the name I gave her. A weird name for a girl, for anyone really, unisex too. But Hailey's a girl name. Hiccup's a girl. I mean, I'm not gay. I mean, Emma's right saying I haven't really liked anybody. I act all mischievous, coming out as creepy and perverted to some people, but I never drool over classmate's boobs or sneak peeks at pornos. I'm just not a sicko or need to get off or

anything. I don't get all stiff around other guys, so I'm not gay. Right? Hailey's a girl... like Elsa. Who cares if some guy with red-brown and green eyes and the name Haley pops up claiming to be looking for someone? That doesn't mean he's Hiccup. \_Jack rolled over, curling to a ball to better fit his bed. \_Only Hailey tastes like sweet frosted chocolate, I'm sure of it. And boys don't taste like sweet pastries!\_

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

"Oy! Anklebiter! Over here!" Aster's voice sounded.

Haley turned and waved. "Yeah?"

"Remember how you invited me to hang out with you downtown today?"

"Yeah, are you going to have to cancel?"

"Nah. My brother, he's about fourteen already, he's just moved back from Russia yesterday and I wanted to hang out with him. You think it'd be cool if he tagged along?"

"I have no problem with it. Emma and Jamie seemed around thirteen years old, I believe. At least, they don't look much younger than that. Your younger brother should be able to fit in just fine. Have you seen Cristoff since this morning?"

"Yeah. He gave me his digits and booked it off somewhere. I think his folks called or sumthin'. He said he'd meet us at the coffee place, though, at three, so it can't be too serious. I wish I could show ya to the cafÃ©, but my brother-"

"I'll have no problem finding it. You gave me excellent directions at breakfast to give to the others. I shall meet you at three pm."

"See ya later, mate."

Haley waved back as Aster ran from sight.

\_If we do meet up, then we'll be friends.\_ Haley thought with a smile. He put his papers and folders into his backpack and shrugged into it. It was rather heavy, and would be in the way when wondering through Uptown burgess, but he had to carry it around. He couldn't take the train to downtown and then come all the way back. That would be ridiculous. It was time to find a good bookstore and sit down with a book until it was time for his rendezvous. He checked his wristwatch.

About three and a half hours until then

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Anna hummed happily, going through her wardrobe choices and wondering which would make a statement while being able to keep her warm. Elsa was sitting on her bed reading a magazine idly.

"You just met him, Anna."

"Exactly. I have to make a good impression. I have to dazzle. He's a

cute little nerd, I'm sure it won't be too hard" She bit her lip softly. "Maybe those new cargo shorts and a tank top"

"Are you crazy? You'll freeze." Elsa reminded turning a page.

"All right, how about a dress? A classy look might catch his eye."

"Aren't you being very obvious? You're not the kind of girl who wears a dress to hit a guy straight in the forehead on the first date."

"Well, no. I guess not." She held up a purple cloak with a matching head gear. "How about this?"

"All right. What will you wear inside?"

"Hmm... this one." She held up a blue dress, the top part a darker hue. "Cute, normal looking,"

\_She's really serious about that guy. \_Elsa smiles a bit, shaking her head. "You'll look lovely, Anna."

"Thank you Elsa."

"But you just met this guy. And he doesn't seem your type at all." Elsa asked, sitting up as Anna quickly pulled off her robe and pulled on her carefully selected clothes. "I mean he seems nice but-"

"I don't know. He's just so cute, Elsa. He kept blushing and stammering and so adorable." Anna blushed. "There's something about him that makes me feel all giggly."

"I've never seen you have a crush like this." Elsa said a little confused.

"I know, I feel so strange. Maybe I'm in love!" Her playful pale blue eyes lit up.

Elsa made a look. "Okay but just take it easy, all right?"

"Okay, but-Oh Elsa, I'm just excited! Maybe it happened for me finally!"

Elsa looks sceptical. "You mean love? You've been chasing after every guy that you thought was attractive since you hit puberty trying to find your \_'love at first sight'\_. What makes you think some scrawny, nerdy little genius like that kid could be him?"

"Because... he's so different, Elsa. Unlike anybody else." She pressed her hands against her heated cheeks. "I can't wait to see him again. I wonder if I'll get all fluttery inside?"

Elsa frowned at her dreamy-eyed sister. \_This can't bode well.\_

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Haley opened the door to the convenience store nearby the cafÃ©. Only twenty minutes until rendezvous. He walked through the convenience store, glorying in the heaters after Burgess's cold afternoon. He

stopped by the open refrigerated area and dropped his pack to the ground lightly.

He looked idly over the selection of food, mainly snacks, as he worked the kinks out of his shoulders. His eyes fell upon a bowl of free samples and his body went still. He reached out and took a tinfoil-wrapped pastry and read the fine print on the oval sticker. His hand reached into his pocket and pulled out an identical, albeit faded, oval sticker.

\_Chocolate cookie with a frosted snowflake.\_ His mind whispered.

\_\*\*"And I'll come with my sled and," a small voice whispered into Hiccup's ear, "a frosted-snowflake cookie just for you."\*\*\_

Haley smiled and held the cookie to his mouth, its top corner just touching the end of his nose. "A frosted-snowflake cookie just for me." he whispered softly.

"Are you okay?"

Haley jumped and dropped the cookie back onto the bowl in surprise. "F-fine," he gasped, turned and meeting the light blue eyes of his \_'surpriser'.\_

"I didn't mean to startle you. You look a little flushed and I thought maybe you were having a headache or something. My mom gets them all the time." The young boy replied.

Brown bangs hanging off either side of his forehead, the middle part shaved partially off with a thin ponytail with a fluff on the end. '\_Young boy' \_isn't quite right for this boy. He didn't look much younger than Haley, anyway, although a little younger. Maybe exactly fourteen years of age.

"N-no. I was just remembering something. I'm a little flushed from my walk outside carrying around this pack." Haley took the cookie again and putting it into his pocket.

"Oh, okay... Oh, right, I'm Jim, by the way. Jim Hawkins."

"My name is Haley Horrendous Haddock, it's a mouthful, I know. Are you here alone?"

"Nah. My mom is here, too. We live in a diner slash motel at downtown Burgess, and we were around the area visitng a family friend and decided to shop here before heading home."

"Ah. I am meeting with some friends at a cafÃ© nearby and should be heading on my way. I would invite you along, but I don't think your mom would agree." Haley smiled.

Jim smiled back. "Yeah, 'm sort off grounded right now for skateboarding at a construction site."

"Jim! Jim! James Pleiades Hawkins! Ah, there you are!" A woman that resembled Jim went forward, her arms full of plastic bags. "Be a dear and carry these for me."

Jim took them from his mom. "Can you cut those two weeks to one week?"

"We'll see how you do in the diner later," the woman smirked. "I'll at least reconsider selling your board."

"Yeah, okay. Oh mom, meet my Haley, Haley, this is my mom Sarah."

"Mrs. Hawkins, it's nice to meet you." Haley acknowledged respectfully.

Sarah smiled. "Nice to meet you, too, Haley."

"It's been very nice getting to know Jim, but I have to go meet up with friends." Haley turned to Jim. "See you around. I live in around here, maybe when you're not grounded anymore you'll be able to meet with my other friends." \_At least.. I think we are friends, we've only known each other for such a short amount of time. \_Haley frowned lightly, and then smiled at Jim, remembering himself.

Jim smiled back. "Sure. I hope we do meet up again. I don't really have a mobile but you probably do?"

"Yeah."

"Why don't I give you the diner's phone number and you call me when you have some free time? My school doesn't start for another two weeks, so I'll be free after noon."

"That seems like a very good idea. Will it be okay, Ma'am? For me to know your directory?"

"Oh, yes, yes, go right on ahead." Sarah smiled. "Jim needs more friends."

"Mooom..."

"Thank you."

A few moments later, Haley waved goodbye and set off towards the cafÃ© and Jackson Overland.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

"Haley, oh Haley over here!" a voice called out as Haley entered the coffee shop. He looked around and spotted a brunette and sliver-blond.

Anna and Elsa were sitting at a table near the back by the windows, holding iced coffee and sharing a plate of cake. They both were looking strangely excited and flushed. He moved towards them, barely catching a shock of wide green orbs from young man from the corner of his eye.

"Aster!" Haley exclaimed. "I was expecting you to be a bit later than this. You must be his younger brother?" He added turned towards the teen standing next to his new friend.

"Yeah, hey I'm Dimitri Sudayev... Our parents divorced," Dimitri

added seeing the slight confusion cross Haley's polite features. "mom remarried."

"Oh, I see. Nice to meet you, then. My other friends are sitting over there, in the corner, shall we?"

They continued to the table with the gaping girls.

"You didn't mention meeting E. Aster Bunnymund." Elsa frets as the three boys sat down, fixing her hair.

Haley blinked. "Does it matter? I was planning to introduce you. Do you two have a history?" he asked with confusion.

"Nah. I've never met her before." Aster smiles at Elsa, "I would have remembered a beauty. My name is obviously E. Aster Bunnymund. I would be honored if you'd call me Aster, however, beauty."

Elsa blushed up to her hairline. "Oh, w-w-w-well! We just met, I couldn't possibly." Elsa stammered as Aster bowed and winked. He slid into the seat next to her and reached for a strand of her silver-blond hair.

"May I ask your name, beauty? Or should I continue as I have been?"

Haley blinked, puzzled, at Aster's sudden transformation of a relaxed and almost lazy manner, to smooth and cooler than cool.

"My brother is in girl-catcher mode, does it whenever I'm around since we had an argument ways back about which one girls prefer, aussies or russians." Dimitri shrugged. "just watch." he whispered, apparently amused.

"My-my n-name is El-Elsa Ar-r-rendelle. Y-you c-can call me E-E-E-"

"Elsa, what a pretty name. Even better than 'beauty'." He joked lightly, his eyes gazing into hers.

"Oh-Oh my" Elsa sighed, leaning towards him as if she couldn't help herself. "You're so much more handsome in person." She murmured.

Haley, Dimirti, and Anna smiled behind their hands.

"Excuse me." Anna suddenly interrupted. "I don't mean to be a spoilsport, ah Elsa has obviously forgotten about a lot of things in the last minute, like introducing me and remembering she has a boyfriend."

Aster frowned as Elsa pulled away, blushing and shaking her head. "Oh, oh, right. Oh my-I didn't-well" She shook her head again. "This is my best friend and sister, Anna Arendelle. We both are really big fans of yours." She blushed and stared down at the table. "I'm sure you hear that all the time."

"Well, aye." Aster agreed, "But hearin' you say it sounds better."

Elsa flushed tomato red. The other three barely kept their chuckles in check and carefully avoided each other's eyes.

"Oh, it's Cristoff! I think-Yeah. The others are about to enter as well." Haley announced suddenly, rising from his chair.

"Oh Jack. Oh-sorry!" Elsa jumped up. "I'm acting so strange! I'm normally not like this at all."

"Jack, Emma, over here!" Anna called out.

Haley waved Cristoff over as well.

"AH?! YOU?" Jack blinked down at Aster rubbing his eyes. "No freakin' way!"

Aster made a face. "Feelin's mutual, mate."

Haley coughed, trying to avoid any unnecessary fights. "So, guess it's time for all around introductions." he proclaimed. "Everyone these are my friends from the Institute Cristoff Reintroll and E. Aster Bunnymund, whom these two seem to know of... and Dimitri Sudayev, Aster's younger brother."

"Aster is in a famous boy band, Haley." Cristoff explained. "they turn hand-to-hand combat techniques into dance moves for their numbers. His father composes their songs."

"Oh really? I had no idea!" Haley mused surprised. "That's what you meant when you said your band was a 'full-time gig'."

"Aye." Aster was currently staring Jackson down, as if challenging his right to sit down next to his friend, Elsa.

How strange. Haley thought as Jackson gave up and sat down on Haley's other side, so now the auburnette was flanked by him and Dimitri.

"Cristoff, Aster, this is Jackson Overland, his sister, Emma, and their friends, Elsa and Anna Arendelle." Haley introduced, smiling to himself.

It was funny, he was new in Burgess and used to be introverted, or at least friendless since he was more focused on returning to Burgess to make friends at Berk and yet he was making the introductions to people he just recently met.

But maybe he was just socially-frustrated and really wanted to have friends after all.

"Hello!" They all chorused.

"Where's Jamie, Emma?" Haley asked her.

"Jamie couldn't make it. His mom told him to clean his room when I went to go get him."

"Couldn't he just clean it real fast and follow?" Dimitri asked, leaning around Haley to meet her gaze.



She blinked and a small flush of red appeared over her nose. \_He's handsome!\_ She thought to herself. "You obviously don't know, Jamie." she giggled. "He'll spend half the day trying to argue his way out of it and then spend the rest of the day pouting and pretending to clean while actually playing his video games. Then, when his mom starts screaming the next day, he'll start cleaning and spend the whole day doing it."

"Sounds like a plan, though I usually skip the whole first day of that routine." Dimitri joked.

Emma sat down next to her brother, throwing glances at the Dimitri and blushing. He kept sneaking glances back and smiling when he caught her eye. Cristoff sat in between Emma and Anna, clearly not used to be in such a crowd of unknown people. He just knew Aster and Haley yesterday, too. Haley looks at the young brunette Arendelle girl and could swear she was staring at him.

\_I'm imagining all this,\_ Haley told himself firmly. He glanced at Jackson Overland and blushed faintly.

"Why don't we all order sumthin' to drink and get to talkin'?" Aster suggested, leaning back indolently in his chair and laying his arm across the back of Elsa's chair.

A few hours later, all of them were laughing and talking animatedly. Haley kept hiccupping at one point, but they were all too busy laughing at a story Jackson was telling to make fun. Their cups were mostly ignored, and a few crumb-laden plates were pushed to the side as they leaned across the table or fiddled with their forks absently. Almost simultaneously, they all agreed to leave and go to back downtown to check out Haley's apartment. After their uneventful trip, except for when Anna stumbled into Haley on the train when it lurched to a stop and Cristoff caught her causing her to snipe at him, they \_'ooh'\_ed and \_'ah'\_ed over Haley's large apartment.

"I told you guys that it was a three bedroom, two bath." Haley reminded the goggle-eyed Aster and Cristoff.

"Yeah, but-I don't think I really believed you. Your parents got this for you?"

"Yeaah, they really wanted me to make friends." He smiled ruefully. "I didn't have time for friends in Berk. I wanted to come back to Burgess so much that I hurried through school too fast to make friends."

"Why Burgess?" Dimitri asked incredulously. "There's nothing special here. Then again, less colder than Russia at least."

Haley blushed and looked at his feet as everyone's eyes looked towards him. "Well, Burgess Institute was one of my reasons, of course. It's has a great curriculum. I used to live here, too. But-" He trailed off and scratched his cheek. "The main reason is a promise I made." He smiled softly. "I never made friends in Burgess, but I did make one here very long time ago and I promised him I'd come back and play in the snow."

Jackson felt his back stiffened and his hands curled into fists his hoodie pockets.

"Oh, how sweet! Have you met up with him?" Anna asked excitedly.

"I don't know, actually-I can't remember his name. As I was only five at the time, I'm surprised I remembered at all, to be truthful." Haley laughed nasally and \_'shoo'\_ed them out. "I have to get back to my parents' hotel now."

"Elsa and I will go ahead and go home."

"Right." Cristoff hurriedly agreed. "I have to get home to study anyway."

"Oy mate," Aster nudged him. "can't leave 'em girls to go off alone, walk 'em home. I'd do it if I didn't have to go another way."

"That's sweet, Mr. Bunnymund." Elsa accepted graciously.

"Crikey, no, don't. I'm not that old," Aster laughed. "Aster will be fine for everyone."

Anna agreed. "Yeah! And you can call me Anna. I don't mind at all. It's been so much fun." She happily told Haley. She quickly gave the same offer to everyone else who was not already calling her Anna.

"Guess calling each other by last names would be a hassle. You all can use my given name as well, too."

"Please, don't call me Jackson. It's Jack, for everyone." Jack requested.

Cristoff, Emma and Dimitri gave their own consent, as well as Haley.

"Bye everyone!" Anna called out waving as she, Elsa, and Cristoff walked away.

"Do you three mind if Aster and I tag along? I'm not doing anything else today and I'd like to continue getting to know you guys." Dimitri asked.

"Sure!" Emma chirped, linking her arm with his. "We should exchange numbers, Dimitri."

The two thirteen-year-olds pulled ahead and began to talk earnestly about something or another. The three older boys followed at a slower pace, all caught up in their own thoughts.

\_Was that kangaroo flirting with Elsa? I should be angrier... why aren't I more angrier?! Stupid Emma and her 'Hailey might be Haley' talk. He made a promise... a promise a long time ago... like me... I wonder if he is Hiccup? ... He is NOT Hiccup, dammit!\_

\_I shouldn't have made it so obvious! Jack must know I'm his friend from before unless he doesn't remember me... or if he isn't the one... It is possible he isn't... but he's so close. What if he is but doesn't remember? Or what if he does remember, but he's homophobic or thinks the memory is just something trivial and

childish? Does he have a girlfriend? Speaking of which, I should tell Aster not to flirt with Elsa so much. She's obviously addlebrained around him and she has a boyfriend.\_

\_I can't believe that racking showpony is her boyfriend! Of all the bloody idiotic, stupid, bullshit! My romantic rival is a clod with a bleached head! Or maybe he's just blind? I was being pretty obvious! I was playing with her hair and touching her hand and calling her 'beauty', how much more obvious can you get? He just talked about sledding, bobsledding, tobbo-watchamacalit and high school and then stared at the table like it was flirting with Elsa! Maybe they're having relationship trouble and he's going to start yellin' at her when I'm not there-maybe they'll break? If that bastard makes her cry-\_

"Hey! Haley, are you listening?"

Haley blinked rapidly at Emma who was glaring at him. He noticed sadly that her eyes were almost level with his. \_Why can't I be more taller?\_ "Sorry I was not listening. Were you speaking to me?"

"Yeeeeees..." Emma sighed out exasperated. "Dimitri and I were talking and I decided your name is too... for lack of a better word, feminine."

Dimitri nodded. "We could talk about you with our parents and stuff, like later to explain wht we've been doing, and we'd have to keep clarifying the gender."

"Why don't we come up with a nickname for you?" Emma asked pleasantly.

Haley's green eyes were puzzled. "I don't see why not." He replied. "My name is like a girl huh? Doesn't help that there's no difference in pronunciation as there is at the spelling."

"Yeaah." Emma smiled though to Haley it looked rather sneaky.

"Ems, what are you up to?" Jack asked suspiciously, also thinking she was acting strange.

"Oh, nothing." Emma answered with a singsong voice. "So, your new name... How about Hiccup?" She grinned.

"Emma!"

"Whaat?" Emma blithely smiled.

"Hiccup?" Aster snorted. "cause of thos antics back at the shop?"

"Hiccup?" Dimitri made a look, wondering why'd that be her choice.

"Hiccup..." Haley breathed. \_She was the little girl who was sick like me! \_He turned to Jack excitedly, only to have his smile fade away.

Jack was glaring at his sister angrily. His eyebrows were drawn low

over the bridge of his nose and his eyes gotten dark they looked like a icy storm. He looked absolutely ferocious. "Will you shut up, Emma?"

"Eh? What just happened?" Dimitri choked out.

"Why are you so angry? It's just a name." Emma snapped back equally angry.

"It is not just a name. And you know it, damn it, Emma! No else can have that name!"

"No one else?" Haley queried with hesitation. \_I don't want to know... I don't want to know! \_His mind screamed.

"I used to know a girl a long time ago and gave \_her\_ that name and Emma knows how much \_she\_ means to me. \_\*\*She,\*\*\_ Emma, how much \_she\_ means to me."

Haley felt something heavy and icy filter into him. The ground beneath him seemed to disappear and his legs almost buckled. \_She... \_Suddenly, the scenery was changing \_why?\_ Everything was moving too fast for him he couldn't see. Somebody was shouting his name... his name... not Hiccup.

\_He remembers but... he doesn'the doesn't want to think I could be Hiccup. He doesn't want a boy to be Hiccup. I should have known I should have known I'm a boy and so is he. It's different when you're not seven and five, stupid, worthless Haley. \_

He didn't realize hot tears were streaking down his cheeks.

**\*\*Author's Note: Complicated in so many ways, I know. Please review\*\***

#### 4. My Guardian Pursuit

**\*\*Author's Note: Hi again. Thanks for the reviews please please please please keep them coming! Just out of curiosity, tell me what you think will happen to the pairings of this fic. Hope you enjoy. If you haven't read Paoshirou Hozomi's works yet, you gotta give them a try.\*\***

**\*\*Disclaimer: I don't own anything.\*\***

**\*\*My Guardian\*\***

**\*\*Chapter Four\*\***

**\*\*My Guardian Pursuit\*\***

\_\*\*Ring Ring.\*\*\_

Murmuring of Valka's voice. Footsteps moving towards his door. Barking of Toothless.

\_Please, don't knock. I don't want to talk, mom.\_ Haley begged silently. \_If I start speaking... I'll start crying again.\_ he laid

his arm over his eyes and his lips begin to tighten.

His bed was beginning to get uncomfortably warm, as he had been laying here ever since he had run home earlier that day. Earlier... when Jack, his Jack, unwittingly rejected him.

\_Just because I'm a boy\_. He barely suppressed a fresh sob.

\_\*\*Knock knock.\*\*\_

"Haley, dear, a friend is on the phone for you. He said you didn't answer your cell." His mother and father hadn't left the hotel when he didn't come to meet them, and decided to stay awhile, at least until he felt better.

"Who is it?" \_Is it Jack?\_ \_Does he remember now? Is he going to apologize? Or want me now?\_

"It's a young man named Aster."

\_No.\_ Haley felt his pent-up breath whoosh past his lips. \_I don't want to talk to anybody. I just want... my dream to come back. \_

But his body was moving, pushing itself off his bed and almost running towards the door. No matter what he was telling himself, a part of him wanted to talk to somebody, anybody. It wanted to tell someone so he could feel better. He wanted a friend who could understand. He opened the door.

"Thanks, mom." Haley reached for the wireless phone. "Hello." He smiled at his mother, Toothless snuck in jumping ti his bed and then closed the door, walking over to his bed and sitting beside it. Toothless placed his head over the teenager.

"Are ya okay, mate? 've been ringin' the alcapone all this time."

A thousand answers raced through Haley's mind, all having to do with telling Aster the truth.

"Yes. I'm fine." Haley lied. He frowned. "I'm sorry, I lied. I'm not fine. I'm just a little upset. Is there anything you needed? I don't really wish to speak of it." he pushed the dog's head to his shoulder.

"Uh, yeah, sure, mate. I was actually wonderin' if I could move into the apartment tomorrow. My folks got wind of the idea and both of 'em start harping in on me. Can ya believe that? After, like, over a decade of ignorin' each other, they finally ganged up together on me, their son, their firstborn, bloody hell."

Haley laughed. "I don't see how it could be a bad idea. I'm already moved in, as you already know, and I'll be here tomorrow. Oh, I have a dog, I forgot to mention. Is that going to be a problem?"

"What kind of dingo? Well, nevermind. Just so long as it ain't gonna me alive."

"Okay. I'll ask my parents to take him out an a walk while we move you in. So he won't get in the way. Should we call Cristoff and make a day of it?" he suggested.

"Oy, great idea! Let's do it. You wanna call Cristoff?"

"Would you mind doing it yourself? I... I'm not really feeling up to it right now. I think a good night's rest will help more than anything."

"No prob, mate. See ya tomorrow."

"Yeah. By the way, Sorry about the worrying I caused you."

"Like I said, no prob, man. My dad always drinks hot tea before taking really hot shower when he's upset. You should try that. I've done it once and it felt great."

"It does sound very relaxing. I was already planning to drink some tea, but the shower sounds like a fantastic idea as well. Bye, Aster."

"Bye, Hale!"

\_Hale... I guess there are other ways to give me a nickname.\_ Haley thought amusedly as he pushed the \_'end'\_ button.

"Haley, it's almost time for dinner."

"Thanks, dad. I'll be right out."

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Jack sighed disgustedly and threw his phone to the other end of his bed. \_What happened? He just ran off and he won't answer his phone! I went out of my way to get it from Anna,\_ \_and dealt with all her annoying questions, and he still won't answer his phone after the fiftieth time!\_

"It's all your fault, you know."

"What?!"

"That he's not answering his phone. It's your fault, Jackson Overland. I hope you like being the reason Hiccup started hating you."

"Hiccup doesn't hate-and Haley is not Hailey let alone Hiccup!"

"Stop lying to yourself. You saw them, didn't you?"

"Saw what?" Jack said softly looking away.

"The tears. You saw them."

"Haley wasn't crying."

"Oh, so it rained on his face?" Emma spat.

"SHUT UP!" Jack bellowed, grabbing his pillow. "GET THE HELL OUT OF MY ROOM!"

A pillow flew towards Emma and she quickly dodged.

"I'M JUST TELLING YOU THE TRUTH! YOU HURT HIS FEELINGS, JACK! After ten years, and he finally comes back and you make him cry!"

"HE IS NOT HICCUP! SHUT UP!" Jack threw his book bag towards her general direction, purposely missing. His headgear for bobsledding followed. He pointedly ignored the hot, wet feeling on his face and the way his eyes felt itchy.

Emma, however, noticed what he refused to and left. \_I don't believe him! What's wrong with him? Is it just because Hiccup's a boy?\_

"Pesky Emma!" His desk chair hit the ground and his toes began to smart. "Pesky little sisters," a book slammed onto the ground, "and their stupid noses," he punched the desk angrily, "in other people's business! It's none of her business!" He kicked the overturned chair for good measure with his other foot.

"Jack, what are you doin-JACK! Clean up this mess!" Thiana shrieked as she entered his room.

"Get out, mom."

"Don't you talk to me like that, young man. You better clean this up before dinner or you won't get any. Did you throw your book bag at the wall!? Jack, you left a dent in the wall!"

"So?"

"You're going to pay for that with your own allowance."

"Whatever. Can you get out now?"

She frowns sadly and left. Jack fell to the ground and leaned back against the desk behind him.

\_What am I going to do?\_ \_Haley can't be Hiccup.\_ \_I mean... I... I can't be in love with another guy. I'm not gay.\_ \_Haley doesn't even seem gay and Anna really likes him and Elsa...\_ Jack let his face fall into his hands. \_Everything...\_ \_I mean... everyone\_ \_it'll hurt a lot of people.\_ \_Elsa will get so confused and Anna would hate me. And my Uncle North and Aunt Thiana... They're my only parents now... what would they say if I told them I was in love with a boy? Would they hate me, too? The gay kids at school always talk about the bullying they get and they way their parents changed around them in some way. I don't want my parents to hate me... or my friends.\_ \_How much does Hiccup mean to me? If Hiccup is a guy would I risk all that? I don't know if I could. Does that mean I never loved him at all?\_

Jack's fingers dug into his skin and hair and he gritted his teeth. Tears slipped down his cheeks to fall to the wooden floor. The shadows grew long on the floor and dinner came and went. Movement outside his room ceased and still he sat there, his jaw tight and the floor dark in between his knees.

Haley stared blankly at the ceiling.\_ I wish we could have stayed five and seven forever. Then, he would love me, too.\_ He closed his eyes and took a deep breath. \_I have to be okay. I have to be okay and get over it. It's not the end of the world. I'm only fourteen... and a half.\_

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

"OUCH!"

"Are you okay?" Cristoff called to Anna around the mattress.

"Fine... I just hit my head on the door jamb."

"I can't believe that a mattress could be so hard to carry." Cristoff joked.

"Yeah, well, move it, blondie. We have to get this crap inside, too." Aster snapped, straining with the one of his large amps.

"I should help you, Aster. All I have is your boomerangs."

"Shut up and make sure you don't bang it on anythin' I want not one scratch on those things. They're a novelty!" Aster hissed.

Haley struggled between amusement or annoyance and decided to chuckle quietly.

An hour or so later the five of them (Aster, Cristoff whom was ran into Anna on his way here, Dimitri, and Haley) were draped over various furniture pieces, panting and grinning.

"Moving is complete." Haley announced.

"Until Christopher moves in," Anna reminded them.

"It's Cristoff. And I haven't decided to just yet." Cristoff anxiously put in as the other three muttered darkly.

"When you have, you're paying for movers, fuck it."

"Good thing my parents aren't here to hear that."

"I thought your parents had a hotel room, Haley." Anna said suddenly.

"They did, but when all my stuff got moved, they decided to stay here until they left."

"How long are they planning to stay?"

"They are leaving in two days, actually. They extended their stay because they enjoy it here. A little vacation for my workaholic dad."

"How sweet." Anna gushed.

"Bro, I have to get home."



"Oh, right. We better go."

"Aster, should I come, too? We planned on going to the bookstore." Cristoff half-rose from his seat on the desktop.

"Oh, aye. You can meet my mum. See ya guys!" Aster waved jauntily.

"See ya, Anna, Haley."

"I'll see you guys around." Dimitri followed the two older boys out.

"Would you like some tea, Anna?" Haley asked, getting off Aster's bed and dusting off his shirt.

"Um... Haley... I wanted to talk to you about something." Anna blushed and fiddled with a strand of hair.

"Yes?" He turned towards her and waited.

"I-uh... I-I really like you, Haley." She blurted out.

Haley blinked. "Really?"

"Would... would you go out with me? Like... on a date?"

Haley stared at her. "What?"

Anna blushed brightly. "I want to go out with you, Haley."

"Oh."

Silence fell as he stared blankly at her. Her blush was getting hotter and she stared hard at the floor.

\_I feel so strange. I've never felt so awkward and shy before. I'm not myself at all!\_ She gulped nervously.

"All right."

Her head flew up. "What?"

"I'll go out with you. When would you like to go on our first date?"

"Re-really?" Her voice sounded a bit high-pitched.

"Sure."

"Oh, um, I'll call you, okay?" She ran past him and out the front door.

Haley remained standing in Aster's room. His green eyes were dark with pain. \_I'm so sorry...\_. He thought... to whom he didn't know.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Emma looked over Jamie's math homework and nodded. "Much better, Jay. You're getting a lot better. Great job." She handed him back his paper.

"Really? That's awesome, thanks Ems!" Jamie beamed and threw his arms around her snuggling her shoulder. She giggled and hugged him back.

The song '\_That's when I love you\_' by Aslyn sounded throughout Jamie's room. Its source ended up being in Emma's pocket and she quickly pulled out her cell phone. "Oh, Dimitri!" Emma exclaimed happily. "Yes. Exactly. Oh? But Dimitri..." She laughed. "All right, I'll call you back later. Bye." She turned off her phone and put it back in her pocket.

"Dimitri?"

"I told you about him, didn't I?"

"No."

"Yes, I did!" Emma protested then thought about it. "Oh, no, that's right. I had a fight with my brother yesterday so I forgot to tell you. I met him Uptown yesterday with everyone. He's Haley's roommate's younger brother. He's nice! You'll love him, Jamie, you'll see. I told him all about you." She smiled happily.

Jamie smiled back at the enthusiasm. "All right, I believe you. You don't lie." He decided. "I have to meet him soon, though, 'kay?"

"Sure thing, Jay." She kissed his cheek.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

\_\*\*Ring Ring.\*\*\_

Jack picked up the phone automatically as he walked past, holding a piece of buttered toast in his mouth and a plate stacked with food in his hand. He was starving after a whole night of fasting and then he woke up really late.

"He-oo." Jack greeted around his toast.

"Jack?"

"'Lsa?"

"Did you break your nose again?"

"No!" Jack exclaimed, his toast falling to the ground. "Damn it, I dropped my toast!"

Elsa giggled. "Sorry, but I have good news!"

"What is it?" Jack grumbled trying to figure out how to get the toast without dropping food or phone.

"Anna and Haley are going out!"

The plate of food fell to the ground, scattering food. The phone fell from Jack's numb hand and knocked against the sideboard it was sitting on, swinging wildly from its cord.

"Jack? Jack!" Elsa's voice sounded so far away and small.

He ran from the phone, from his house and his room. He ran to the park where his last promise to Hiccup was made. Under a tree, his face pressed to the rough bark, and his hands in fists at his side, he tried hard, so hard, not to cry again. His fist hit the bark in rage.

"Damn it! WHAT'S WRONG WITH ME?"

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Haley walked with Anna the next day, talking about the movie they had just seen. "Can you believe the graphics? Amazing! It all looked so neat!" Anna exclaimed excitedly.

"Yeah. Do know how long it took just to create one?"

"No, how long?"

"First, they had to-" He trailed off and went still.

"Haley?" Anna looked up at him and followed his gaze. "Oh, it's Jack." She opened to mouth to shout.

"Wait!"

"What?" Anna stopped in the middle of taking a deep breath and looked back at him.

"Let's just go to lunch by ourselves. We were having a good time talking." Haley suggested, already turning.

"Oh, okay!" She blushed prettily and linked one of her arms through his. They began to walk away from Jack and the group of friends around him that included Aster, Emma, Dimitri, and Elsa.

"ANNA! Anna, over here!" Elsa's voice called out excitedly.

Haley felt his body go tight.

"HADDOCK!"

"I have to go."

"What?" Anna blinked.

"I have to go."

"HADDOCK, GET OVER HERE!"

"Wha-" Haley ran, ignoring her questions.

"DAMN IT, HADDOCK!" Jack's voice continued to bellow.

\_No, no, no, no I can't look at you,\_ \_Jack. I can't, I don't want to

cry again! I'm not going to turn into a puddle of emotions! I can't be sane around you right now!\_ Haley screamed in his head.

His green eyes darted around, frantically looking for a place to hide. He turned a corner and faced a convenience store entrance. He darted inside and ran into the opening just inside the door. The bells over the door were still jangling from his panicked entrance.

"Hey! What's up with you?" barked a curious, feminine voice. He spun in a circle and met the eyes of a young, blond girl.

"I need to hide, now!" He looked out the door and knew Jack was just behind him.

"Jump the counter, then." She moved back a bit and he jumped over.

"Thank you so much."

"Hush shush." He closed his mouth as she put on a pleasant smile. The bells over the door jangled sharply. "Good afternoon."

"Did-you-see-a-guy-with-auburn-hair?" Panted out an angry voice.

"Hm? Auburn? He didn't come in here I think I saw him run past, though. Real crazy looking, with khakis on."

"Yeah, him. Where'd he go?"

"Oh... that way, I guess." She jabbed her thumb over her shoulder and shrugged. "You gonna buy something?"

"Nah."

The bells jangled wildly again. The young girl held up a hand below the countertop to stop Haley from moving and stared hard at the door.

"Wow, you got yourself a parade following you." She dropped her hand and smirked down at him.

"They're my friends." Haley explained, rising.

"Then, why're you running?"

"I... can't talk to the boy that followed me into this store." He climbed awkwardly over the counter. "Sorry about that." He bowed low. "You allowed me to hide in the only place he couldn't see me even though I could have jeopardized your safety if I had been lying."

"Woah, don't use big words. It's no prob." Haley smiled at her use of words. He blushed vividly as his stomach growled. "You hungry? We can picnic here or out back. My parents own this store and I can close for lunch. I normally do 'round this time and no customers are allowed in till I re-open."

"It's all right; I'll go eat at a diner nearby."

"I would like someone to talk to while I eat lunch. It's kinda boring otherwise." She flashed a quick grin. "I'm dying of curiosity over here, so you can tell me why you're running from tall, albino, and angry, and I'll pay for lunch from the stock you see before you." She waved a hand towards the store merchandise.

Haley smiled appreciatively. "That would be nice. I've been wanted to talk about it, actually. My name is Haley Horrendous Haddock."

"Haley's good. So, my name is Astrid Hofferson. Call me Astrid. You're about to bare your soul and I think cordialities should be forgone." She hopped over the counter and flipped the \_'open'\_ sign to \_'closed'\_." "Walk and chose your poison."

"All right, Astrid. First, may I ask you... how do you feel about homosexuals?" Haley asked hesitantly.

"So long as there's love and protection, then I'm good with it." Astrid answered easily enough.

Haley heaved a sigh of relief.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

"Damn it, damn it!" Jack growled angrily.

"Why did he run away!? We were having such a good time, too! Jack, what the hell did you do?" Anna shrieked and rounded on Jack.

"I didn't do anything, he did! He ran off like a maniac! How am I supposed to apologize or whatever if he runs off and doesn't answer the phone when I call?" Jack tugged fruitlessly on his hair.

"Whatever. I'm going home. Elsa, want to come with and eat some lunch at Rapunzel's place?"

"Sure. Jack, is it okay?"

"Whatever." Jack grumbled.

Elsa glared at him and turned on her heel. The two girls walked off angrily.

"Real smooth, showpony." Aster smirked.

"Just sweep her off her feet and run off with her already Mr. \_I'm-in-a-band-I'm-so-cool\_." Jack snapped.

"Jeez, bro, don't bite off everyone's head because you feel guilty." Emma rolled her eyes.

"I'm not guilty of nothing." Jack stalked away.

"Should we follow him? What if he hurts himself?" Dimitri raised a brow.

"Nah, he needs to get rid of some steam. We'll just be in firing range. Let's go eat."

"Good idea." Aster agreed heartily. "I have gig practice tonight and I'm going to need energy."

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Jack stomped down the street muttering and kicking anything that wasn't alive. He glanced around wondering where he was and recognized the convenience store he could've sworn Haley had disappeared into. The sign now read 'closed'. He looked inside a little peeved. He had been vaguely thinking of going inside to buy something to eat.

His jaw dropped.

Haley and that blond-braided chick were sitting up on the counter eating out of cartons. They seemed to be talking animatedly albeit seriously and Jack felt something painful, like a punch in the gut. He angrily pushed at the door and fell down onto the tile inside the shop as the door swung in, completely taking him by surprise.

"Oh, damn, I forgot to lock it again!" The girl cursed. "The shop's closed-Oh, it's Ja- I mean, hey there, stranger."

Jack jumped to his feet and ran to Haley, grabbing his upper arms before the startled teen could turn away. "WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON?" Jack yelled in Haley's face.

Haley's green eyes looked desperately at the blond girl, but she just shook her head, smiling, and backed away.

"I just don't want to speak with you right now, Jack."

"WHY THE HELL NOT?" Jack shook Haley violently.

"Don't shake me, Overland!"

"I'm going to shake you until your crooked teeth fall out! You know how confused and stupid I've been recently? I can't stop thinking about you and I wanna know why, damn it!" Jack continued to shout and shake.

"You promised me! You promised to play in the snow with me!" Haley finally bursted back. "I thought when I came back... I thought when I came back we'd be together, but you are so homophobic you hurt my feelings!"

The shaking stopped.

"What?" Jack breathed.

"I promised, didn't I? I promised I'd come back. I finally came back and you don't even want me to be me." Haley glared at the tile floor. "You want me to be a girl." He whispered.

"Hiccup...?"

"Did you really think I was a girl? Or did you lie to yourself to

make yourself feel better, less homosexual for kissing a little boy?"

Jack frowned and let go of Haley turned Hiccup once again and stepped back. "No-I just-wasn't ready to confront that I could be-are you really-" he swallowed, and took a deep breath and held out his hand, pinkie extended and his fingers clenched in a fist. \_\*\*"Pinkie promise to come back to Burgess when you're grown up."\*\*\_ Jack ordered again, his own eyes kind of shiny.

Haley held out his own pinkie, shaking slightly. \_\*\*"Will you promise to remember me and play more games in the snow, not just sledding, with me?"\*\*\_

\_\*\*"Yes. I promise."\*\*\_

\_\*\*"Then, I promise to come back."\*\*\_ Their pinkies linked.

"It... It is you."

"Yeah... But you don't want it to be me, do you?" Hiccup frowned, dropping his hand. Jack rubbed the back of his neck. "I just-It's because I-I wanted Hiccup to be a girl. If you were a girl... I wouldn't be gay. I... I wouldn't hurt or confuse people... I wouldn't confuse myself."

"I don't understand."

"Anna really likes you, Hiccup. Elsa says she thinks she's in love with you."

Hiccup's eyes widened.

"My parents... Well, they died in a car accident since you last saw them but... my parents weren't really... supportive of gay rights... And I'm not sure about how my Uncle and Aunt, they're my parents now, would take it... and the few gay kids I know get bullied and their parents get all weird." He stepped back to Hiccup and cupped his cheek. "What if you get bullied when I'm not there to help you? What if my parents now hate you and me? What if my friends and the friends you just met get angry and stop talking to us? What if you start to hate me, too? Hiccup, it's too complicated."

"But..." Hiccup closed his eyes and took a deep breath. "I love you."

Jack gapes. "H-Hiccup... That's..."

"Too soon, yes, but I do. It's all I ever knew, growing up. I don't think I'll ever stop. I promised to come back to you, Jack."

"Damn it, Hiccup." He wrapped his arms around the smaller auburnette. "I've been so confused these past ten years. I kept hoping that you'd be a girl so it'd be easier, so I could understand better."

"Do you hate me then, for being a boy?"

"No."

"I guess that was a rather melodramatic question. Do you like me

then?"

"Yes."

"That's all that matters to me." Hiccup brought his hands to rest on Jack's chest. "My parents know about you already... well, they know of you and they don't mind at all anymore that I'm in love with a boy. And I made a friend today who'd probably ask to watch us make out and offer us money."

"Hey, not exactly. But yeah, I guess, nothing too graphic though." Astrid shrugged.

"It might not be enough... but I do love you. I don't want you to be unhappy, though, being with me."

"Damn, Hiccup... I don't know what's wrong with me." Jack buried his face in Hiccup's hair. "I missed you. You're the only one who's ever affected me in any way ..."

"Really?"

"Yeah."

"Then, what are you doing?" Astrid snorted. "Who cares if you're gay? Whoever does aren't your friends or don't care about you. That girl, Anna, she'll get over it as long as you tell her the truth. I have to open this store back up, so you two should scat." Astrid hopped off the counter.

"I'm sorry, Hiccup." Jack whispered.

"It's all right."

"I really do have to open this store up, boys."

"Can we... can we try it?" Jack whispered.

"Try what?"

"The whole... gay thing, I guess."

"You mean, like dating?"

"Yeaah.."

Hiccup blushes. "I guess we can."

"Good." Jack exhaled loudly, tightened his hold on the shorter boy, and pressed his lips against Hiccup's.

Hiccup closed his eyes and leaned in closer, pressing his lips hard against Jack's. His arms wrapped around Jack's neck, and he pushed himself up onto his tiptoes, his mouth opening slightly when Jack's tongue touched his lips.

As Jack kissed his Hiccup once again, after ten years of waiting, everything seemed to click. If he had had any doubts left, they were swept away by the feeling of Hiccup's lips against his own, and the taste on his tongue, sweeter and softer than his remembered. Maybe



because at five and four, they didn't know what a French kiss was, let alone how to do it.

\_Chocolate with frosting... he tastes like chocolate with frosting.\_ Jack pulled away and grinned his big, unforgettable grin, flashing his pearly whites, seeing those emerald eyes looking dazedly back. He finally whispered back.

"I love you, Hic."

Astrid smirked, applauding at them. "Encore, encore"

**\*\*Author's Note: Not over yet! Way way waaaaay not over yet! Problem one, Elsa. Problem two, Anna. Problem three, North and Thiana, and boats load of more coming up cause, problem four, Jamie didn't meet Dimitri yet. Problem five, Dimitri and Jim haven't met yet. Honestly, it goes on. Please review and you'll see how fast I can get chapters up!\*\***

## 5. My Guardian Poison

**\*\*Author's Note: Bah, I'll stop bothering with reviews. This will be just for my entertainment, I guess. If you guys like it, review. If you don't want to, that's fine too. I'll just keep updating.\*\***

**\*\*Disclaimer: I own nothing\*\***

**\*\*My Guardian\*\***

**\*\*Chapter Five\*\***

**\*\*My Guardian Poison\*\***

Jack walked home slowly, a big, dorky grin on his face. Confusion was over, anger was all gone, and he finally got the kiss he'd been dreaming about since he was thirteen. Thirteen, the year he realized why he couldn't love Elsa, the year he remembered Hiccup, the year he remembered the kiss and realized he wasn't an asexual goon. \_Having Hiccup for a boyfriend means kissing and snuggling and stuff, right?\_ His grin got dorkier as he imagined snuggling with his short boyfriend on the couch watching a movie. Or cuddling on his bed, which was much better. Cuddling in bed sometimes leads to other things, like kissing and sexual frustration.

He dreamily wondered where the stairs up to his apartment had gone, because he didn't remember walking up them, and opened his front door.

"Jack? Is that you?" Thiana asked looking around the doorway to the kitchen. "Jack? What happened? You look high... did you do drugs?"

"Nope." Jack kicked off his shoes, never liking to wear them anyway, and grinned at his mom. "Drugs aren't half as good as kissing."

"JACK!"

"You asked." He walked past her astonished face and sort of floated to his room. Kissing Hiccup was better than drugs, and almost better than a snow day, and he couldn't wait to do it again. He flopped onto his bed and sighed happily.

"Jack?"

"Yeah, Emma?"

"What happened? The last time I saw you, you were angrier than I've ever seen you." Emma sat down at the edge of his bed.

"I don't think I'll be angry again for a very, very, very long time." Jack laughed. "It feels great, Emma! To finally realize I can love somebody other than a figment of my imagination. I finally managed to tell him back, Emma. I can't believe I thought loving him wouldn't be worth it."

"I'm very happy for you, Jack, even though I'm really confused and you have to tell me what happened, but first; wouldn't be worth what? Did you tell Elsa that you two weren't a couple anymore? Did Haley do the same to Anna?" Emma calmly and softly asked.

By the end of her questioning, the happy dazed look was gone and replaced by a wild crazed look. "DAMN IT! DAMN IT DAMN IT FREAKIN' DAMN IT! I knew I forgot something!" Jack sat up and grabbed his lack of pigment locks with tightening fingers. He closed his eyes and dropped his head in between his raised knees.

"Jack, whoa, whoa, calm down. Think about Hiccup, and only Hiccup. Breathe, just breathe..." Emma soothed, rubbing his back. "It's okay. You just have to explain to Elsa calmly and truthfully. She's been your friends for seventeen years, Jack, she'll understand."

"But... but... what if she doesn't, Emma?" His blue eyes flew to hers as he raised his head. "She's my best friend, Ems; I don't want to hurt her." He dropped his hands in between his legs to his covers.

"If she doesn't, then she's not your best friend," answered Emma in a stern voice.

Jack glanced at her startled. "What?"

"Don't get me wrong, she won't like it. She probably will be hurt. It's only natural." Emma scooted closer and sat side by side with her brother. "But she was your friend first. If she can't understand that this will make you happier than you've ever been, then she's not a true friend. It doesn't matter if she doesn't like it, or if she's gets angry or hurt, but if she flat out refuses to allow to this happiness without your guilt, if she refuses to understand, then it is not your fault, but hers."

"That's harsh, Emma."

"No, it's truth." Emma sighed and closed her eyes. Jack wondered why she seemed to be in pain. "People can use your good heart against you, Jack. Without even meaning to, Elsa will be able to make you feel like absolute scum just because you want to be happy and she can't help you be so. Especially because Hiccup isn't a girl." she

pointed out pragmatically. "I need you to understand before you talk to her that you will be hurting just as much as her. You'll think you have failed her because she does mean a lot to you and you might make her cry. It's not your fault you can't love her in the way she wants, it's just the way the cookie crumbles. You love Hiccup; that should be what matters most."

"Emma... how... why... Emma?" Jack stammered in questioned, wondering when his sister seemed like she was older than him.

Emma understood his confusion, however, but merely smiled. "Not now, Jack. My life is... getting complicated as well and I'm trying to deal with it, okay? Just... concentrate on your life first." She slid off the bed and walked out.

Jack frowned and debated on following her. He knew his sister, though, and knew she wouldn't tell him anything if he bugged her about it. She was a private person who hated her personal life being pried into without her permission. One of the reasons Jack was so befuddled by her relationship with Jamie was that he that exact person to pry into her life because the guy was too concern for his own good. When the bomb never went off the past two years of their relationship, instead just getting stronger and deeper, he let it go and decided a little prying from someone who cares a lot about her might be helpful sometimes.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Emma stared down at her missed calls log and sighed.

\_Jay\_ (8)

\_I have to call him back soon. I just feel so horrible. I don't want to lie to him, but if he asks the right questions, that's all I can do. \_

She dialed his number slowly and pressed the top of the phone against her lips. With a deep breath she hit \_'talk'\_ and placed the earpiece to her ear.

"Ems! I've been calling all day! I finished cleaning my room at, like, four and wanted to go to the movies."

"I had made plans and forgot my phone at home, I'm sorry."

"Oh, okay. So whaddya do?" She could see him lay back in bed, a laid back smile on his face.

"I hung out with Dimitri."

"I thought you were gonna let us meet?"

"I am! But you were cleaning your room and I didn't want to call you and tell you my plans and make you feel bad." Emma explained rapidly. "You know how you get when you feel like you're being left out."

Jamie laughed good-naturedly.

"That's true; I'm a whiny little brat, huh?"

"Whiny little brat? More like the whiniest, littlest, brattiest brat ever." Emma teased back.

"Hey! I'm not that bad, well, sometimes... like when there's candy involved. Sophie's still worse."

"She's only five."

"Details, details. So, when ya gonna meet up with him next? I'm cool for a while."

"Umm... tomorrow" Her voice became small.

"Cool, when? I wanna tag along and say '\_hey\_' to this guy. I know you like him if you hang out with him so much."

"Well..."

"Emma?" Jamie was silent as well. Then, "You don't want me to come, do you?"

"It's not that I don't want you to come but you can't." Emma explained desperately.

"Why not?" His voice was hurt and a little scared.

\_Oh no, I knew it, he's going to start thinking that. \_"We're not doing anything, Jay! We just need to be alone tomorrow. We had something planned and he really doesn't want anyone else around."

"What are you going to do?" His voice was bland and low.

Emma winced. "Nothing."

"Emma."

"It's nothing, I swear!" \_I sound so guilty.\_

"I have to go to bed."

"It's seven 'o' clock."

"Yeah, well, I'm tired from calling you a thousand times." The line went dead.

Emma pressed the top of the phone to her forehead as it flashed the number of minutes the call lasted.

Four.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Hiccup felt everything in him inflate into large floating balloons. He was surprised he wasn't lifted straight off the ground and levitating home. His feet skipped up the stairs and he opened the door with a triumphant swing. Aster and his parents were sitting in the living room watching the news.

Cristoff walked out of the kitchen as Hiccup wandered in, and he grinned widely. "For someone who doesn't feel ready to move in, you come over enough."

Cristoff blushed. "I was helping Aster with school shopping and came over for dinner. I'm going home as soon as the news is over."

"I didn't say it was a bad thing, Cristoff." Hiccup literally hopped over the step that separated the foyer from the hallway. "I feel like having some cookies."

"Did you even have dinner yet? And I don't think we have cookies."

"Maybe I should go to the convenience store for some then. I feel like having one with frostings. I feel great, actually!" Hiccup walked to his room.

The others watched with shock as he skipped slightly every third or fourth step.

"Odin's beard. My son's skipping." Stoick muttered. "I can deal with him being gay, but if he starts liking the color pink, I'm drawing the line."

"Dearest one, shut up." Valka hissed, jabbing his side, reminding him there were people present who didn't know their son's preference.

Luckily, the two fellow Burgess Institute students were too busy being shocked at Hiccup skipping and hopping.

A knock interrupted their shell-shocked state.

"I got it." Cristoff offered automatically, still frozen in the hallway. He walked to the front door, his cup of coffee still held in his hand. "Oh, hey. Elsa, what are you doing here?"

Aster rose up from the couch and walked towards the door frowning.

"I need to speak with Haddock."

"Why do you need to speak with Hale's parents?"

"No, not them, Haley himself, I need to speak with him."

"Oh, okay. He just got here and went to his room."

"All right." She shoved past the confused blond man. She didn't even glance at Aster and continued her dogged pace to the back of the apartment.

"What the bloody hell?" Aster blurted.

"I don't know." Cristoff took another sip.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Jack dialed the number again and frowned. "Why isn't Elsa answering?"

Damn it." He tossed his cell onto his bed and paced the room. "I need to talk to her!"

"Jack, dear? What's going on? Are you throwing stuff again?"

"NO! I'm just trying to get a hold of Elsa, but she's not answering!"

"Are you having troubles? You can talk to me. I might be able to help."

Jack looked hard at her. "Yeah. You might be able to." He dropped onto his bed and his mom took a seat at his desk chair. "You see, wait... did I ever tell you about Hiccup?"

"I think your mom told me once." Thiana thought back to it "A little boy who ran away from home a long time ago? Then he moved the next day?"

Jack gaped at her. "I should've just asked you. Wow. Damn."

"Jack, you should really stop cussing so much."

"Anyway, when I started dating Elsa, I wondered why I couldn't I couldn't like her. Like, I didn't want to kiss her, or hold her hand, or anything. I thought maybe I was this asexual weirdo, but then I had this dream, ya know?"

"If this is about puberty, I'm getting you pamphlets."

"MOOOM!"

"All right, all right, I'll shut up." Thiana chuckled.

Jack continued to tell her how he figured out why, about Hiccup and Hiccup not being a girl, and finding Hiccup and kissing Hiccup, and now he had to break up with Elsa, but he couldn't figure out how to do it so she wouldn't be mad, or sad, or hurt, or stuff.

Thiana watched him talk and gesticulate wildly and frowned.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Hiccup opened his door, smiling widely. He blinked in confusion when Elsa stood before him. "Elsa?" He automatically greeted.

"Nice to see you again, Hiccup."

"Wha-what?"

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

"Jackson."

Jack looked up from the ground and met his mother gaze startled.

"What? Why'd ya call me Jackson?"

"We need to talk to your father about this."

"Why? Isn't this a girly thing?"

"It might've been, if Hiccup wasn't a boy and you hadn't kissed him."

"Wha!?" Jack choked out.

"We need to have a family meeting."

Jack stared at her with an open mouth. \_Whoops, damn it... I completely forgot she doesn't know I'm gay.\_

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

"You-you know I'm Hiccup?"

"I've known since Jack ran into your face."

"Why didn't you say anything?" Hiccup demanded angrily.

Elsa stared hard at him. "Are you really that clueless? Aster knows... Jack and I are dating."

Hiccup's eyes widened and he stumbled backwards. Elsa stepped into his room and closed the door behind her. "Nobody told me. I thought you two were best friends." Hiccup didn't notice her eyes grow sad.

"We've known each other since we were in diapers, born in the same hospital and raised together. Our mothers were friends since middle school."

Hiccup fell back, over Toothless's body and onto his bed. The dog lapped at his master. He ignored the canine. "What... what do you want, Elsa?"

"I want you to leave Jack alone."

Hiccup looked up at her. "What if he remembered I'm Hiccup?"

"I know he does. The fact he's been trying so hard to believe you're a girl proves it. I know Jack very well." She leaned against the door and smiled sadly. "I've been watching him for years and years. I've been in love with him since I was a little girl. I'm comfortable with him and I can be me." She met Hiccup's eyes angrily. "No one is taking him away from, Haddock."

"He can't be owned, Arendelle." Hiccup stated with a hard look back at her. "If he decides to break up with you because he's not happy, there's nothing you can do about it."

"No, but there's something you can do."

"Why would I help you lie to him? I've already told him I love him, and I won't take it back, Arendelle."

"Then that makes you selfish."

"You're just as selfish, refusing to let him choose."

"I'm thinking about him, Haddock!" Elsa snapped. "Do you know what's going to happen when it gets out that he's fucking gay? Do you have any idea?"

Hiccup blinked. "N-no..."

"You don't know anything about his life and you're so close to messing it up, Fishbone!" Elsa pushed away from the wall and threw her hands in the air.

"Tell me, then."

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

"Can we just get this over with so you can stop staring at me like I've grown a second head?" Jack snapped, leaning back in his chair.

His parents frowned. "Just because you're seventeen doesn't mean you're adult. You continue to speak with respect."

"How about it, I respected you guys even though you left me alone with Emma when she was four and I was eight. And you don't let me off the hook now? That's great, real fair." Jack remarked sarcastically.

His parents twisted uncomfortably and frowned. "You know we had no choice, Jack. But that's not the issue here." Thiana reminded him shortly. "We need to discuss your... relationship with this Hiccup boy."

"You do know how this will affect your life, don't you? Have you even thought about the consequences?"

"You have no idea." Jack shook his head. "But I decided being happy was worth it. I'll be getting out of school in three years. The other kids will get over it eventually."

"Exactly, eventually. You know what happens before end of that eventually?" North spoke up. "You'll be harassed at school, teachers won't respect you anymore, team mates will look at you different and maybe even ignore you as team captain. You've been working hard for that title since you started first year of Junior High and you got it before high school started and you've maintained the title since."

"Yeah, and I'm the best there is. Skiing, snowboarding, Ice skating, stirring a bobsled, I can do 'em snow sports all My teammates won't forget that so easily. If they do, I'll be cheering when they lose every competition or almost every one. My teachers don't really like me that much anyway."

"You may not be the top of your class, but you aren't stupid." Thiana protested.

"I make pranks in class and sneak in food. I ditch class sometimes, too."



"Well... that doesn't-"

"You think that people will accept it so readily? You're a popular young man, I know, but people aren't going to accept it with open arms immediately."

"I know, mom. But when they see how serious I am, they'll get over it. I won't be throwing Hiccup in their face, either. He'll be in college and the hazing won't be real bad, if any."

"What about Elsa, Jack?" North asked.

Jack finally showed some regret. "I haven't been able to feel... like this about her at all. Not in the year we've been dating. I... only Hiccup makes me feel anything at all. And being with him... just for a few moments... I feel really happy. Just thinking about him makes me calmer and happier and... better."

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

"He's really popular, Haddock. He's captain of the Burgess Winter sports team, too. If he just comes out gay, do you realize how many people will be against him? His team mates might ignore him completely! He could lose his captaincy, even get kicked off the team. He loves being in the team. He made the title as Captain on his first year of High school, he could lose the scholarship his coach was telling him about. His uncle and aunt are really poor. Did you know they left Emma and Jack alone when they were only eight and four and made him baby-sit her? He knew how to cook eggs and bacon by his eight birthday because he had to feed her himself while his parents were working."

"I... I didn't know."

"No, you didn't." Elsa snapped. "You how he'll be ostracized before we even start our Junior year of high school? You may be fine, being a college student, but Jack is going to be stuck in the middle of a public high school in Burgess. We aren't completely backward here, but it'll be at least a year of slander and bullying for him. He'll handle it, don't you think he couldn't!" Elsa waved a finger in his face. "But he doesn't have to; he'll be doing it for you. That's why you're selfish, Haddock. You waltz back into his life after ten years and don't even think about how much it can hurt him, being in love with you."

Hiccup looked down at the floor. "What can I do? I love him... He told me..." Hiccup trailed off and balled his hands to a fist. Those words would stay with him now, his comfort when he was alone. "Does Anna really think she's in love with me? Are you doing this for her, too?"

"Yeah, she's my sister. I've... I've never seen her so crazy over a guy before, at least not in the same way. She thinks about everything she does for you and waits at her phone every night waiting for you to call her or wondering if she should call you."

"I shouldn't be with her anymore. It'll hurt her. I can't love her back. I dated her thinking... thinking I could like her, thinking I could get over Jack... but now? I just can't." Not remembering his lips and his words and smile.

"What happened today? Did he find you?"

"Stay out of it!" Hiccup spat angrily.

Elsa took a step back, hitting the wall at his rage. It disappeared in an instant.

"Sorry..." He dropped his face in his hands.

"Haley..." Elsa whispered, suddenly feeling horrible and disgusting. \_I'm hurting them; I'm going to hurt them so much. He isn't going to love me, I should stop now.\_ She knew it was too late now, the poison was already inside him and it would be in Hiccup every time he was with Jack. "C-call him, Haddock. End it now. Whatever happened today, end it now." She choked out.

Elsa spun around and flung open the door. She ran from the apartment, and continued running out the front door. She could feel the desperate sobs welling up in her and tears were filming her eyes.

\_He's the only one for me, I had to do it. There is no one else who will ever love me for me, who I can be myself with. I don't want to be lonely forever! I want to be with Jack forever and be happy, too. I'm so sorry! I'm so sorry! Please, forgive me!\_ Elsa hid her face with her hair and sobbed.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

"Jackson, how can you know that this boy is the one you want to give up everything for?" North sighed. His foster son's words struck a chord inside him. It was the exact way he felt about Thiana, a feeling he never lost, through all the years a scrimping and arguments and anger, he still loved his wife more than he could possibly put in words, besides that she made him happier, better, and calmer.

"I'm not going to give up everything." His icy blue eyes looked sad and hurt. "I'm not going to give up on my family. No matter what you guys have done, you've done your best. We're not the richest, hell, we barely make middle-class, but I know how you guys were sneaking into our room after lights out and kissed us and tucked us in and made sure we were okay. I love you both; you're my mom and dad even if not biological. I love Hiccup, the same way you love each other. I feel... great, now. I've been so confused, trying to be '\_straight\_' and '\_normal\_', for you guys the most. His parents accept him, please, please, accept me, too." Jack begged his eyes serious.

His parents looked at each other and rose. They walked around the table and wrapped their arms around their only son.

"We only want what is best for you, Jack. If you really feel like this will make you happy, we'll try our best to feel happy for you." Thiana told him.

"It'll be strange, and it'll take some time, son. But I'll do my best for you Jack. I think I understand."

"Thank you so much!" Jack exclaimed, tears falling down his face. "I

was so scared. I could deal with all, but it would hurt coming home where you both hate me!"

"We could never hate you, Jack. Never!" Thiana cried out, hugging him tighter.

North squeezed his shoulder. "You're our son, adopted or no. Don't be stupid. And you better keep up your grades above failing and stay on the team. You need that scholarship."

"Yeah, yeah. Whatever, same rules, right?" Jack joked.

Thiana smiled. "Which reminds me; you're grounded."

"WHAT?"

"You cussed, you're grounded."

"Damn it!"

His parents laughed. "You just aren't going to learn, da?"

The phone rang suddenly and Jack jumped up. "Maybe it's Elsa! Or Hiccup." His face broke into a grin and he leapt towards the phone. "Hello? ... Hiccup! Great, I have great news. You'll never believe this, my parents-Hiccup? What's up? Is everything all right?"

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Hiccup slowly typed in Jack's number and hit \_'talk'\_.

\_Don't answer, don't answer, please. If I see you, maybe you can change my mind. Don't answer the phone, please!\_ Hiccup pleaded silently with all his heart.

The phone picked up and Jack's voice drifted over the line.

"Hello?"

His heart sank. "It's me, Hiccup."

"Hiccup! Great, I have great news!" His voice was excited. Hiccup swallowed hard.

"You'll never believe this, my parents-"

"Jack. I have to talk to you about something."

"Hiccup? What's up? Is everything all right?" His voice was worried and Hiccup felt his heart begin to tear.

"We can't be together."

"What!?"

"We can't, I can't. I've got too much to lose."

"What, but I thought your parents?"

"My parents are one thing, but my life is another." Hiccup voice was calm, though his hands were shaking. "I'm in the middle of a brand new life and a brand new school. I have college and living expenses, and I need a job. I don't have time to have a boyfriend or worry about how he's getting hazed in his high school. What if it gets out I'm gay, too? My career opportunities will begin to disappear. I'm in a field of learning that's not very advanced in the sexual preference area. Corporate workers with limited views are going to be my associates." \_I'm lying out of my teeth.\_ "A lot of options are going to be closed to me because of my high school boyfriend, and I can't risk it. I've worked too hard to get where I am now."

"Why does that seem messed up? Hic, what aren't you telling me?" Jack's voice was getting louder with panic.

Hiccup sucked in his breath and closed his eyes tightly. "Please, refer to me as Haley."

"Hiccup?! Hic, don't you hang up!"

"I have some studying to do for my classes that start soon. I do have to go."

"Are you still going to go out with Anna? Are you doing this for Anna?!"

"Good night, Jack."

"Hiccup!"

He pushed the button and the line went dead beneath his hand. The tears fell and he reached for his only comfort, his best friend Toothless.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Jack felt worry creep into him as Hiccup voice quietly interrupted his words. He began to explain lowly and slowly and calmly how they couldn't be together and Jack felt the ground disappear beneath him. He fell to the ground with loud thump. Hiccup continued to speak.

\_Something is wrong. Something is so wrong. What's wrong? What's going on? \_"Why does that seem messed up? Hic, what aren't you telling me?" His voice came out strange; what was wrong with it? He couldn't tell... there was something wrong and he couldn't tell.

He saw his parents walked forward out of the corner of his eye.

"Please, refer to me as Haley."

If Jack had been standing, he would've fallen again. His legs were boneless and his hands were getting numb, everything was getting numb. It was building up inside him and words were difficult to form. There was something final about Hiccup's words.

"Hiccup?! Hic, don't you hang up!" Jack ordered, searching for a reason, any reason why Hiccup was leaving. Why was Hiccup leaving him?

"I have some studying to do for my classes that start soon. I do have to go."

\_He sounds so damn calm! Why is he so freakin' calm?! \_"Are you still going out with Anna?" Jack raised himself to his feet awkwardly, clutching the phone.\_ Don't leave me! Hic, don't hang up! Tell me what's wrong! \_"Are you doing this for Anna?" \_That has to be it! He doesn't want her to be heartbroken over him! But how about me?! He said he loves me!\_

"Good night, Jack."

Jack flinched away from the phone and then pressed it immediately back. "Hiccup!" The line went dead in his hand. "He dumped me. What happened? What freakin' happened?" Jack muttered staring at the phone as if he had dreamed it. "That couldn't have happened. What happened?"

"Jack?"

"Mom... Mom, I think Hiccup just broke up with me. Mom," He turned to her with blank eyes. "Mom, why'd he break up with me? He told me he loved me"

"Come here, sweet tooth." Thiana held open her arms and he ran to her and cried onto her shirt like he was a child again.

"Mom, I don't understand! I don't understand, mommy!"

"Shh, shh, it'll be okay, sweet tooth. It'll be okay. Call him back tomorrow. Go to sleep and tomorrow call him back. Maybe something happened. Maybe... maybe he'll change his mind, dear. Just talk to him after you calm down, okay? Just cry it out and call him tomorrow, okay?"

"I don't understand! Mommy, mom, I I think he meant it, mommy. I'm so confused. I thought it would be over, but it's worse now, MOMMY!" Jack sobbed wildly, clutching her tightly.

"Let's go to bed, okay? C'mon, c'mon, dear, come with me, Jack."

Jack let her lead him away as North returned to the kitchen to get a cool cloth to lay over Jack's eyes.

Emma returned to her room. During the '\_interview\_', she had snuck out to listen and then overheard the phone call.

\_He's right, something happened. I remember the look on Haley's face when Jack said Hiccup was a girl. He couldn't have just broken up with him for nothing.\_

Emma met Thiana's eyes over her brother's head before she went through her doorway. Her mother was confused, almost relieved, guilty, and in pain for Jack.

\_How can she feel so much with one look?\_ Emma wondered. \_It must really suck to be a parent sometimes.\_

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

"Oh Toothles!" Hiccup buried his face to Toothless fur as the dog whined, muffling his sobs. It had been the hardest thing he'd ever done to tell Jack that they couldn't be together. To the very end, Jack had been screaming his name, making up any reason as to why Hiccup was hurting him on purpose.

\_I just want to close my eyes and never wake up! It hurts, it hurts so much! I'm so sorry, \_Jack\_. \_I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm so sorry, so very sorry... \_He continued his litany of apologies until he cried himself to sleep.

\*\*Author's Note: Heavy huh? Don't flame me or Elsa. She's been hurt badly, too. Just a little cautionary tip for peeps out there, break up with current bfs/gfs before going after another. It's better than cheating behind their backs.\*\*

\*\*Oh, names. So it's Nicholas North Clausen and Thiana Faree Clausen. Jack and Emma are still Overlands because since they're poor, they can't bother to pay for getting the official adoption papers. Their relatives, so it was just accepted to take them in. Ah, and it's Thiana who used to be an Overland. Jack's mom's sister.\*\*

## 6. My Guardian Lies

\*\*Author's Notes: I'm glad to be getting feed backs now. It's very encouraging. I hope you're all enjoying this. HiJack revolution folks, let's support it cause I seriously don't get Elsa and Jack. Not flamming anyone who does. But yeah. My opinion\*\*

\*\*Disclaimer: I don't own anything\*\*

\*\*My Guardian\*\*

\*\*Chapter Six\*\*

\*\*My Guardian Lies\*\*

Hiccup felt his eyes try to open with extreme effort. The sun hit his rapidly blinking eyes and he barely held back a groan. His head was aching and his eyes felt as puffy as cream puffs. He lifted a trembling hand to his forehead and licked his dry and salty lips.

\_What happened?\_ He wondered vaguely trying to rise. He fell back down with a boneless flop. "Jack..." His voice wavered through the still, cool air of his room. He pressed the heels of his hands against his eyeballs and felt his shoulders shake with dry, desperate heaves. There was nothing left in him to cry with, no tears left, not even saliva. A loud crash interrupted his self-pitying moment and he jerked up his head.

"POPS! I said left! You just crashed into Hale's bookcase! His parents paid a lot for those!"

His parents... were leaving today. Hiccup hopped off the bed and hurried across his room. "Cristoff, is that you?"

"What? Oh, hey!"

Hiccup blinked rapidly once again as he watched Cristoff struggle towards the room across the hallway from his, following a \_not-any-taller-than-Hiccup\_-which said something-man. "I'm sorry about the noise. My parents were against the moving idea after I told them how long I knew you two. I convinced them I'm twenty years old and can choose for myself, so they had to go along. But they decided they would have to come along to meet you, Aster, and your parents."

"My parents are still here?" Hiccup asked quickly.

"Yeah. They're talking to my mom about your college classes."

"Oh, thanks." He stopped and looked at Cristoff carefully. "Why did you change your mind?"

"Because we're friends." The taller boy set down his box and laid a hand on his shoulder. "I don't know what happened, Hale, but my place is here to make sure you're okay. Your parents and Aster are worried as well."

Hiccup gave him an open-mouthed stare. He closed his mouth quickly, swallowed hard, and then smiled. "Th-Thank you. You have no idea how much this means to me." he whispered.

"Maybe I'll find out one day." Cristoff smiled, shrugging nonchalantly. "Until then, Hale, I'm your new roommate and new friend."

They smiled at each other and then Cristoff grimaced.

"My box is a bit heavy and still requires moving, if you would excuse me?"

"Here, let me help you!"

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Jack walked through the park near his house staring down at the ground and kicking pebbles.

"Yo! Overland, I'll see you in a few weeks, man!" yelled a voice.

Jack looked up and flashed an automatic, empty, grin. "Flynn, hey! Can't wait for snowboarding practice! Don't think I'll be going easy on you, it's going to be hard work from now on."

"Yeah, yeah. Give me enough time to find a girlfriend, at least."

"Hey, you already got Rapunzel!"

"Not saying yes yet to be official, which reminds me, got a date, see ya pal!"

Luckily, the other Junior had already run past on the errand that had sent him across Jack's path. Otherwise, he would've seen the smile

disappear and his captain's face crumble.

"You might not have been my friend when I went back..." he whispered.

"Jack?"

Jack turned at Elsa's voice. There wasn't guilt, or confusion or anything left in him when he saw her worried eyes.

"You called me a lot last night, but when I called back, you wouldn't answer. I called your house this morning and Emma told me that you weren't feeling well and disappeared."

"I didn't feel like being around people." Elsa didn't leave his side. "I meant you, too."

"I can't just leave you alone. Can you tell me what's wrong?"

"..."

"Jack?"

"What were you doing last night that you couldn't answer me? It was important."

"I was in Anna's room and left my phone at my room. You know how excited she gets. She likes my opinion when she picks out clothes for dates. Haley and Anna are going to the aquarium."

Jack flinched.

"Jack, what is it?" Elsa touched his elbow gently.

He brushed her away. "We need to break up."

"WHAT?" Elsa looked horrified. "NO! Jack, what are you talking about?!" Her voice was shrill and panicked.

"Elsa, I can't even kiss you. I don't feel the same way about you and I can't. I've tried, I really have."

"It's only been a year!"

"A year too long!"

Silence fell between them.

"Why?" Elsa finally whispered. "Why? Why can't you?"

"Because I'm in love with Hiccup."

"But-" She cut herself off. "I thought you couldn't remember her?"

"Hiccup's a boy. I'm going to track him down and make him go back out with me." A light seemed to fill Jack up inside and he blinked rapidly. \_DUH! \_"Exactly! That's exactly what I'll do. Maybe if I go see him I'll force him to tell me what's wrong? If that doesn't work,



I'll do all that embarrassing crap they do on those cheesy romances!" He threw his fist in the air, the dead look gone from his face. He turned back to Elsa and grasped her shoulders tightly, his blue eyes boring into hers. "Elsa, I'm sorry. I didn't mean what I said, but I can't sit here and explain. I've got to go think. I'm not good at this stupid crap. Damn it. I'm really sorry, I didn't want to hurt you, but we have to break up, okay? You were my best friend, Elsa. I want to be that again." He ran off.

Elsa remained rooted to the stop. "Just like that, Jack? That's how it's going to end?" She blinked slowly. "After years of loving you, and helping you, and being there for you, and a year of trying to convince you I'm the best thing for you, and that's how you end it?" Her fists clenched as her eyes squeezed shut. "ALL I EVER WANTED WAS YOU! AFTER EVERYTHING WE'VE BEEN THROUGH, IT'S LIKE I'M NEVER EVEN THERE! BEST FRIEND, YEAH RIGHT! I TRIED SO HARD TO GIVE ALL I HAD TO YOU AND YOU DON'T EVEN CARE! YOU NEVER DID! I HATE YOU, OVERLAND! I HATE YOU!" She was sobbed hysterically by now, tears pouring down her face, sniffing as she felt snot begin to run. Her face was red from screaming and crying and her hair stuck to her cheeks, dark with salty tears. "You never even saw me. I've loved you so damn long and you never even saw me!" She fell to her knees and sobbed into the heels of her hands. "It's not fair! It's not fair! Why can't I be happy?!"

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Anna hummed as she brushed her hair slowly. She spun on her toes and stepped to the bed with quick, tiny steps on the balls of her feet. Her years of ballet were good for something: like expressing joy while looking for the prefect date outfit.

"How cute! An aquarium visit and a light lunch afterwards. He has such a way with words and ideas! It's like he got them out of books instead of movies!" She giggled and pressed her face against her long light blue skirt, squeezing it in her fists. "I wish Elsa didn't leave so early and was here to tell me how I look."

\_\*\*Your earrings look really pretty\*\*\_.

Anna shook her head furiously. \_Why did I think of that?\_ \_Who said that anyway? It wasn't\_ \_Haley... he's never complimented me on my looks.\_ She shrugged. "I hear that all the time from loser high school boys." She told herself firmly.

\_\*\*What? You think you're in love with guy you just met?\*\*\_

"Snap out of it Anna!" She shook her head furiously. "Keep Haley and the date firmly in mind. He'll think you're a loony if you go off on mind trips like that all the time." She looked down at her skirt. "OH NO! I wrinkled it!"

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Emma touched Dimitri's elbow lightly. "I'm sure you're just being silly, Dimitri. You remember what happened last night?"

"Yeah, you told me, but it's so hard to believe, you know?"

"Yeah." She smiled softly up at him. "It must be really

scary."

"You're the greatest, Emma!" He threw his arms around her and buried his nose in her hair. "What could I ever do with out you?"

Emma giggled and hugged him back. "You're just being silly!" she repeated pulling away. She met his gaze squarely. "You promise to give it more thought?"

"I can't stop thinking about it, Emma. It's a bit difficult, see?" Dimitri teased, batting his eyes.

She poked him in the side. "You stop that!"

He just laughed and threw his arm around her shoulders. "How about some ice cream for the greatest girl around?"

"Dimitri!" Emma laughed.

"Hey."

Emma stopped and turned. Jamie was staring angrily at her. "Jamie!" Emma's eyes widened and then she smiled quickly. "This is Dimitri. Dimitri, this is Jamie Bennette, my boyfriend."

"We've been dating for two years." Jamie enunciated.

"Yeah, I know dude. Emma told me all about you, of course. She's really proud of you. She says you're one of the best soccer players in your year."

Jamie blushed and scratched his head. "Not as good as Jack, though."

"But he's not into it as much as snowboarding and whanot so you can take the cake, right?" Emma teased.

Jamie and Dimitri laughed. "So, um... Dimitri, was that it? Well, anyway, it's been good to meet you, but Emma and I need to go talk."

"Jay, you know, you can't just show up and whisk me away," Emma snapped.

Jamie glared. "If you had told me the truth, I wouldn't have to '\_whisk you away\_'. We'd all be hanging out together."

"I didn't want you to come, dude. I needed to talk to Emma about something important and I didn't know you."

"But I wasn't even given the chance, dimwit."

"His name is Dimitri!" Emma shouted.

"Who cares? I don't!"

"Hey!"

"You lied to me, Emma!" Jamie ignored Dimitri's offended interjection. "You told me that you were going to be doing homework

today! \_'Maybe this evening we can hang out, Jay.'\_" He imitated her girly voice... badly. "All you had to do was tell me the truth, now I feel like you're keeping something from me. And then I see you guys hugging and laughing and touching all over each other."

"We weren't touching each other all over. I hugged her!"

Once again, Dimitri was ignored.

"You'd want to come along, Jamie, and I knew Dimitri wanted to talk about something important. It's private."

"Then, why couldn't you tell me that? Why couldn't you just explain to me-?"

"You should be able to trust me, Jay. Why would I do anything to hurt you?"

"Why would you lie to me?"

"Maybe we should go somewhere less public, you guys. People are starting to stare." Dimitri tried to interrupt. Seeing as the three of them had converged in the middle of a public sidewalk next to a popular candy store (where Jamie had been when they walked past), teenagers who enjoyed drama, children who were gaping at yelling \_'big kids'\_, and frustrated parents were indeed pausing along the way to stare back at the arguing couple.

"It's none of your business if I want to be with someone other than you! If I didn't think you'd go all whiny on me, I would tell you what I was doing!"

"Oh, so now I'm whiny!?"

"You've always been whiny, Jamie!"

"And you've always been such a little saint!"

"And that's supposed to be an insult?"

"YES! Darn it, Emma, you can't just blow me off and not tell me and expect I'm not going to care! I was going to surprise you today!"

Emma closed her mouth before shouting again. "You were?"

"I was going to buy you flowers and candy, for being whiny about Dimitri." Jamie showed her the huge box of sweets he had just finished buying.

"Jay..." Emma muttered. "I'm so sorry, Jamie. You're right. I was being secretive and rude." She reached out and clasped the hands holding the plastic bag. "I'm very, very sorry."

Jamie looked down at his feet.

"I dunno... I think... I can't trust you anymore. You keep lying to me, Emma... about another guy, too."

Emma and Dimitri exchanged a meaningful look.

"Dimitri is just my friend, nothing more."

"Yeah, I mean, she may be a really awesome person, but she isn't my type. It was my fault she hasn't been telling the truth. I've been asking her to keep it a secret for awhile... I just need some privacy. I'm sorry." Dimitri did a small european bow.

Jamie looked closely at the pair then, contrite and honest-faced. Emma had never lied to him before. Maybe it just for a little while... until her new friend could be more open about himself. "All right, but I want to know what's going on between you two."

"That's something I can't tell you. However, I can tell you when I'm going to see Dimitri. Honestly."

"Well, that's something." Jamie sighed with a shrug of his shoulders. "I think I'll keep this candy to myself, though."

"Hey! That's not fair, Jay! You got it for me!" Emma protested.

"Yeah, well, you made me angry." Jamie stuck out his tongue and pulled out the large red, heart-shaped box and barely opened up one side and peeped in. "I think I see caramels... oooh, and almond nougat."

"Jay! That's not fair!" Emma laughed as she leaped for the box. "all your teeth will fall off from cavity!"

Jamie leaped back and waved it over his head. "It's fine, I wanna meet the toothfairy!" he teased. "If you come over to my house before I eat them all, you can have some. See ya!"

"Idiot!" Emma shouted after him. She giggled behind her hand when he smashed into an innocent passerby.

"Emma?"

Emma turned to a worried looking Dimitri.

"I'm really messing up your relationship with Jamie, aren't I?"

"No! This has been all my fault! I've been confusing him and making him worry. He has such low self-confidence in himself, though you wouldn't believe after seeing all the bravado he just exudes." She smiled fondly thinking of it. "He's thinks I'm really special and liked me ever since kindergarten. He used to bring me frogs and pull my hair. Then, he started giving me his favorite snacks and following me around. I was so annoyed by him for years. I almost hated him" Emma linked her arm with Dimitri's and began to walk towards his house, their destination.

"Well? What happened?" Dimitri urged her after her long pause.

She blushed and smiled. "He saw some cheesy romance from Europe I think... I think his mom made him watch it. He was only ten and got the idea that if you forced a girl to kiss you, she would fall in love with you."

Dimitri gaped at her. "He didn't!"

"Oh, yes, he did. He cornered me on the playground, grabbed my face and gave me the most horrible kiss ever."

"Oh my god." Dimitri groaned.

Emma giggled. "Yeah, he'll believe anything I'm telling you! Luckily for him... I thought it was the sweetest, stupidest, cutest thing ever. And..." she blushes. "something inside me just kind of sparked, like a light bulb busting instead just lighting up over my head. I was filled with these little pops and cracks and I went all fuzzy feeling. When the teachers pulled him away and put him in detention, I just stood there like a loon, staring off into space, wondering what had happened to me. The next day he tried to apologize and I kissed him back, a little bit better, too, I might add." she added smugly. "We ended up in detention, smiling and blushing and trying to catch each other eye and looking away every time we did. We've been inseparable ever since."

"That's cute."

"Isn't though?"

"But... um... because you did end up falling in love with him... does he think...?"

"He does." Emma bursts out laughing. "He's very careful around girls now, and tries not to put himself in a situation where he might accidentally kiss someone. It's quite funny, actually. He really wanted to be in the school drama production for the cultural fair, but it was Romeo and Juliet, so he screamed to the teacher that he would not be Romeo unless I was Juliet. The whole class laughed at him, but he was dead serious. Even though he was a shoo-in for Romeo, he ended up being Benvolio instead because he refused to kiss Juliet."

Dimitri chuckled and pulled his arm away from Emma's and searched for his key in his pocket.

"I'll see you tomorrow, okay?"

"Yeah! See you!" Emma walked away, wondering how her brother was doing.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Jack's fist pounded into the door loudly. He was so excited he couldn't contain himself or hold anything back. If he thought rationally at all, he'd turned tail and run for it and there was no way he was going to do that.

He wasn't a coward, damn it.

The door opened and Jack thrust his arms forward, his eyes closed tight, and his cheeks flaming red. "These are for you! My mom says peach roses mean let's stay together, so I got these!" he shouted loudly.

"Crikey. I didn't think you were a fan, mate."

Jack looked up, blinking rapidly. His cheeks flushed more as he stared into wrong green eyes over a confused, smug smirk.

"They aren't for you." Jack scowled. "Damn it, isn't this Hic-I mean, Haley's flat?"

"It is his place, aye. I live here, so does Cristoff actually. Why are you giving Hale roses?" A pale blonde eyebrow rose with the question.

"NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS!" Jack voice shrilled a bit at the end and his eyes looked over Aster's shoulder. "Where is he anyway?"

"He went with his folks to the airport and then met up with Anna at the aquarium uptown."

Jack sighed and the flowers dropped to his side. "Can I leave these somewhere?"

"Aye. I think Hale has a vase in the kitchen. His mum really thinks of everything, you know. Even if she ain't exactly the chef, She made the dad cook up about two weeks of already prepped food for us. All we have to do is heat it up and dig in. It's amazing! Doesn't taste like leftovers at all."

"Great, really."

"Oh hey, Jack." Cristoff stopped and eyed the young man curiously. "Why do you have flowers?"

"They're for anklebiter." Aster said quickly before Jack could make up an excuse.

Cristoff blinked. "For Hale? Why-?"

"NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS!" Jack shouted again, without the shrilly part at the end, and blushed furiously. "I just want to put them in water and go, okay?"

"Okay." Cristoff continued to the living room, still with a befuddled, blank look on his face.

"Oh and stop calling him Hale or any other nickname." Jack scowled as he went in to place the roses into the vase Cristoff showed him.

Aster made a look. "Who made you the boss? Why're you so-"

"NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS!" Jack screamed. Suddenly, a dog ran out from a particular room and started barking at him. He yelped and ran out as soon as the flowers were safely set on the foyer sideboard.

Aster narrowed his eyes, a vein mark showing in irritation. "What's his bloody deal?"

"That's strange..." The blond tamed the animal. "I thought Jack was dating Elsa?" Cristoff mused as Jack ran off, the door still vibrating from the slam.

"He is... or was... I just want to know why he gave flowers to anklebiter." Aster huffed, crossing his arms. "Maybe Hale did the bloke a favor or sumethin'?"

"Or something." Cristoff agreed.

"I think I should call Elsa." Aster walked back to his room where his cell was resting on his desk.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Anna watched with delight as penguins jumped into the brilliant blue water of the tank before them. They darted and spun and flipped through the water. "I wonder if they ever get bored with so little room." she pondered, her eyes still following one the more playful penguin's progress.

"I'm sure they find it satisfying, if not always exciting." Hiccup assured her. He looked own at the map. "I would like to see the tropical fish if you don't mind."

"Oh, no, I'd love to. They all so pretty and colorful! Like models on a runway, almost." Anna replied excitedly.

Hiccup thought about it and nodded. "I guess. They are quite like models displaying their newest fashions." They moved towards the exhibit.

"Why are you so stuffy around me?" Anna asked suddenly they neared the viewing glass.

"Pardon me?"

"You're so formal and precise with words and keep your back all straight and stuff. It's like you're a completely different person when it's just us two."

"I... I didn't realize." Hiccup honestly answered. \_I guess being around Jack just made me... looser.\_ "I normally speak like this with others. When we first met, however, we were with more than just a party of two. One-on-one conversation is a bit less comfortable, actually, then being with a large group where speaking fast is more effective so you don't bother with precision of words."

"I guess..." Anna looked up at a bright yellow and blue striped fish floating past. "Haley, what do you feel for me?"

"H-huh?" His voice cracked slightly.

"Do you like me?"

"I enjoy your company immensely." He hedged truthfully.

"That's not what I asked, Haley." She placed herself in front of him, the exotic waterscape glowing behind her. "I... I truly believe I love you, Haley!" She blushed and curled her fingers into fists. "I want to know how you feel about me, Haley. You're always so distant and smart-sounding and like you barely notice me sometimes. Or always seem to be looking somewhere else!" Hands fell onto her shoulders and she looked at him-fortunately, she wore short-heeled boots and her

barely being barely taller didn't show.

"I have only known you a very short time, Anna. I'm not a very spontaneous person to most extents to make hasty conclusions on my feelings-" Hiccup started, although the thing with Jack can be counted as the same crime.\_ "While I'm flattered by your words, I feel to return them would be dishonest and hurtful."

"Do you think you could ever love me too?"

\_No.\_ "Yeah... maybe... you're a very good person, Anna." \_But you're not Jack.\_

She smiled brightly up at him, her eyes shining wetly, thought the tears -thankfully- didn't fall.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Aster hit the \_'end'\_ button for the sixth time. Six times he had called her, and six times her cell rang until the voicemail picked up. Something had to be wrong... something had to have happened. But he couldn't find out today. There was still unpacking to do, and his band meets later that night.

\_And the anklebiter is going to home at any minute and see the flowers.\_ Aster smirked at the thought.

The door opened and the aussie quickly rose from the couch.

"Hello! I'm home!"

"Hey, stud."

"Excuse me?" Hiccup looked up from hanging his jacket on the coatrack. He noticed the bouquet of peach roses. "Who are the roses for?"

"You."

"M-me?"

"Aye, you."

"From who?"

Aster grinned. "Jackson Overland."

Hiccup's face went a little white. "Wha?" His soft voice breathed out.

"Showpony came over and left a bouquet of peach roses." Aster leaned against the wall, his smirk getting wider. "Did you know peach roses mean '\_let's stay together\_'? That's what he told me anyway... when he didn't look up and realize I had opened the door instead of you."

"B-but... But he couldn't have."

Aster's smirk began to fade as Hiccup's face began to get whiter and fill with bewildered sorrow and painful hope.



"After what I said, he couldn't have done it." Hiccup reached a shaking hand and touched the white petals of one the roses. "He... really left them for me? He told you exactly that?" His green eyes were shining hotly when they met Aster's gaze and bore into him.

"Aye. He said they meant \_'let's stay together'\_ and told us they were for you. And that is was none of our beeswax why." He deliberately added, hoping to get an answer.

Instead, Hiccup hugged the roses to his chest, on shoe off and the other still half-on, and sobbed into the petals. "I'm so sorry, Jack." He whispered hoarsely.

"What happened? Hale, what's going on?" Aster hurried towards his hysterically sobbing friend.

"Nothing! Nothing, it's none of your business!" Hiccup shouted at Aster, jerking away his arm. He ran to his room limping because of his prosthetic.

Cristoff poked his head out of the kitchen with a confused frown. In his hand he held the rice spatula. "What happened? Was that Haley?"

"Aye, oy, why're ya callin' him that again?" Aster made a look. "ya intimidated of a High school junior and follow his demand?"

Cristoff shrugged. "Just, you know, courtesy. So, did he tell you what the flowers were for?"

"No... but I have a suspicion."

"Really?"

"Aye, but it's goin' to have to wait until tomorrow." He met Cristoff's anxious gaze with his own worried eyes. "Can you watch anklebiter tomorrow and make sure he doesn't upset himself while I check something out?"

"If you fill me in afterwards."

"Deal."

"Deal."

**\*\*Author's Note:** Okay, next chapter, Jim comes back. Thanks for the reviews! Any questions? Flaming any character so far? Review about it. I rarely answer PMs... Sorry, I'm shy that way.\*\*

## 7. My Guardian Secrets

**\*\*Author's Notes:** I forgot to answer a question. Okay, Hiccup is fourteen years old at the first film. In the series, he is fifteen years old. At the second film, he is approximately twenty years old. In this story, Hiccup is fourteen and a half which I kept emphasizing in one particular chapter. He'll be fifteen soon. Keep the reviews going please.\*\*

**\*\*Disclaimer: I don't own anything\*\***

**\*\*My Guardian\*\***

**\*\*Chapter Seven\*\***

**\*\*My Guardian Secrets\*\***

Aster rose quickly, reaching forward and slamming his hand down on his alarm. It was still summer (except it was hard to keep that in mind when Burgess snows year around. The only way you know it's summer if there aren't any snow days) and he had set his alarm. A first for E. Aster Bunnymund. He yawned and rubbed his eyes, kicking off covers. About two hours later, he was showered, hair tied, dressed and ready to go.

Hiccup and Cristoff were staring at him in astonishment, forks and toast hovering forgotten in the air. Toothless just kept on his meal, as expected. "Since when did you start getting up before the sun was directly over head?" Cristoff blurted.

"I needed to get somethin' important done today and decided to get an early start." Aster explained vaguely, reaching for Hiccup's toast. The auburnette never finished his toast anyway. "Grace."

"You could ask, even if I was probably not going to eat it." Hiccup scolded him good-naturedly with a smile.

"What's this '\_something important\_' that you need to get done?" Cristoff asked, remembering his fork impaling scrambled cheese eggs.

"Right." Aster shrugged. "I'm goin' to see Elsa." He watched as Hiccup's face seemed to go carefully blank and his shoulders tightened slightly. It wouldn't have been noticeable if Aster hadn't been looking for it.

But he was.

"Oh? Tell her I said '\_hi\_'." Cristoff requested blithely. He continued to eat his breakfast.

"Uh yeah... tell her I said so as well." Hiccup coughed. "Have a good day, Aster."

"See ya!"

**\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\***

Emma left her room with a slight yawn. "I shouldn't have stayed up so late last night with Jay. Now, I'm going to look like the Monster from the Black Lagoon when I meet Dimitri for breakfast." she muttered to herself. She stepped into the bathroom and started freshening up.

After a grand total of five minutes, she was heading towards the front door towards her shoes pulling her shirt over her head. Nobody in her house was awake before ten unless they had work or school, and they all left before seven. Seeing as it was a quarter after eight,

all was okay.

Or so she thought.

Emma tugged her head through the neck of her shirt and saw a body lying against the couch, long legs spread over the floor, head tilted back weirdly, and mouth wide open.

It looked like a dead version of her brother.

"AAAAAAHHHHHHHHHHH!" Emma screamed and ran towards her dead-looking brother. "JACK!"

"Wh-wha! Who screamed?" Jack's head flew up and his eyes blinked furiously.

It was then Emma noticed the line of drool running down the side of his mouth. "What were you DOING? I thought you were dead!" She stomped into the living room and looked around. In front of Jack was only the TV with the screen all fuzzy like the end of a tape, their Aunt and Uncle still having an old VHS system that practically only play tapes. If they were going to watch a CD, they had to use Jack's secondhand laptop that he got for his sixteenth birthday. Emma ejected the tape inside.

"H-HEY! You can't just-!"

"\_Chocolat\_? That movie with Johnny Depp? Isn't it a girly movie?"

"It's none of your business!"

"Did you actually rent this?"

"No! It was already in mom's old stash of tapes." Jack blushed and tugged the cassette away from her.

Emma raised a brow. "Why are you watching it?" She looked back at the TV and saw stacks of cassettes and DVDs all over the floor, with the laptop on standby at the table. She picked up another one.

"\_Casanova\_?" She reached for a DVD. "\_FAREWELL MY CONCUBINE\_? What is this stuff? Why are watching romances, and most of them cheesy?"

"I got them for an art appreciation course" Jack muttered looking away.

"School's not back, Jack, until the week after next."

"I could have summer school"

"That's what you told the people at the rental stores! I can't believe you! What are you doing?!"

"I want Hiccup, all right!" Jack finally blurted, not minding how creepy it sounded. It was truth. "I thought maybe if I could... do something really special and stuff I could get him back. I got these... but had to think up an excuse so I wouldn't get laughed at. Would you believe how many accounts I opened last night in different stores so I could get all these?" He frowned angrily. "I don't see

why you can't just rent a movie without getting a stupid membership card first."

"Jack... what are you talking about?"

"Hiccup broke up with me remember?"

"Yeaaah."

"Well, I'm going to find out why and change his mind. I need a little help, is all."

"Why couldn't you just ask someone?"

Jack's eyes went dark and his shoulders sagged. "I don't have anyone, Ems. I'm still giving mom and dad time to get used to me, I broke up with Elsa, I can't ask Anna because she's in love with him and her sister is now my ex, I don't know Aster or Cristoff enough to tell them about me being gay and asking for help, and you're always with Jamie or Dimitri nowadays." he looked dejected.

"Oh. I'm so sorry." Emma set down the movies and touched his hand. "Tell me anyway, okay? I'll make time for you when you need me, Jack. I'll always be here for you, no matter what."

Jack smiled gratefully. "Love ya, sis."

"Love you, too, bro."

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Elsa smiled gently and nudged the heavy fabric of silk for a new dress she was designing. Working with her mother at her dress shop before it was open was soothing to her. Something she needed after yesterday even if her mom wasn't there yet exactly. Elsa looked out the glass doors to the front yard and decided to get some air and sit on the snow covered ground, taking a sewn makeshift Snowman doll she called Olaf with her.

It was her element, playing in the snow. \_Snow Princess, that's my princess, \_her father would say.

Anybody could walk by, but she didn't care. She tilted her head all the back and stretched out her arms to her side. Despite the snow and cold, the sun warmed her chilled face and hands and she spun slowly, dreaming that she was free. She took the stick-like hands of her child toy and spun around. It was fun to play with Anna, but sometimes she wanted to be alone, especially since her sister was in love with the one person she loathed right now.

Elsa stopped spinning, clenching her fists.

She always had bitterness issues. She had a relatively happy family, but like girls her age Elsa went to esteem issues. But her case worse than others. It might have stemmed from how her parents treated her back when she was a child, at one point. Elsa used to have a heart illness that they didn't know if it were contagious so as a cautionary approach, they had Anna and Elsa separate rooms. It's not that they spited her or anything but they were being careful so that Anna wouldn't catch it and they could focus their concerns to their

eldest.

Elsa took it the wrong way, however, and when she got better and it turned out not to be contagious, she would throw tantrums randomly at home and hurt any thing or any one around her. Sometimes she'd even hurt herself mentally with all the depressed thoughts that would creep up her mind. If she didn't have such a loving family, she might've not gotten any better.

Even Jack didn't know this side, and for good reason. She hid it from anyone she feared wouldn't understand. She was taught how to hide it, after all. Her parents got her psychological help and with her father giving her advises daily and a mantra that went like \_'Conceal, don't feel, don't let it show.' \_she managed to control her disorder.

Now Elsa was afraid, because even in her calm state, she was still angry at the boy that returned and ruined everything she had with Jack.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Aster watched her spinning slowly along with the doll with wide eyes. She looked so happy and carefree, so young, too. Her face was usually so serious and intensive, as if she had to be responsible all the time. Then suddenly, almost in the blink of an eye, she stopped and her expression turned tight and angry. He hadn't known her long, but this scene before him seemed private, like a secret she didn't want anyone to know. Something in him swelled and hummed as her pretty face glowed gold in the sunbeams. The anger that suddenly appeared, he wanted to erases and change to one of peace.

But Aster didn't want to interrupt, he didn't want to see her icy eyes fly open and grow blank after the instantaneous shock faded and she became embarrassed and withdrawn. So he watched in silence and awe as her moment gradually ended and she opened her eyes sluggishly. Elsa shook her head, bent down to pick up her doll that she had dropped when her expression turned angry and went back to the shop.

Aster knocked smartly. Elsa straightened up with a jerk and looked over her shoulder. She flushed seeing him, and he knew she was wondering if he had seen her. But she didn't know for sure, and only a little healthy worry was in her eyes as she walked towards the door.

"We aren't open yet. Did you need something important?" Elsa whispered.

"Why are you whispering?"

Her face flushed again "I didn't mean to. It's just... inside.. it seems like I should be quiet..." \_to calm myself and not burst out into emotions. \_"it keeps me relaxed..."

"May I come inside? I don't think I'll understand otherwise." \_Smooth, very smooth, Bunnymund.\_

Elsa gnawed on her lower lip. "I guess, sure. Just... it's all right if you don't understand..."

Aster slipped into the still slightly dimmed store. She hadn't turned on the lights and had just let the sun filter in through the windows. The coolness of the vapor and soft warmth of the sunlight felt strange and refreshing at the same time. He paused and closed his eyes on instinct. He knew immediately why she felt the need to whisper, in this cool warmth.

"People need to be calm, aye. In an employee's case, they need to prepare for the stress that awaits them. Ya should add some flowers in here, it'll help the ambiance and calm." Aster spoke softly. "They'll help employees and clients too. The flowers can be happy for the customers after they drink in every soothing moment they can before the sun wakes them up."

"Oh... how... poetic." Aster opened his eyes to see Elsa gaping amazingly at him.

"My pops is a songwriter. I don't write the lyrics much but I help."

"Oh, I knew that. I just... I didn't think a boy would understand."

Aster shrugged. "Vacationed to Australia to visit relatives, my grandparents own a garden and I rather see green bushes and fresh cut grass for spring than snow any day so I know what I'm talkin' about, beauty."

Elsa nodded, entranced, "So you really like flowers?"

"Spring, in general. One spring break I spent entirely at Australia, best Spring break ever even if I got back to school late." He chuckled. "After livin' there the entire time I've been there for Spring break, it's hard not to like 'em."

"I like flowers, too." Elsa said then she frowned. "But I'm still much prefer the snow. I've been used to the cold so long that a warmer weather of your average Spring can aggravate me. I miss snow days, good thing school will back soon so that means autumn isn't far off. Although it's funny that the dead leaves will just be covered by snow anyway. Then again that might be a good thing. It'll start snowing again, but the wait used to annoy me. I tend to curse and scream and I snot all over myself when I cry because I rather be back in the snow." she widened her eyes in horror at what she revealed.

Aster didn't seem to care. "That's all very good to know. You see, I'm makin' lists about beauties and their hobbies. You say you snot all over yourself when you cry? That's a new one"

Elsa glared at his smirk. "It's not funny, I'm serious." she snapped, trying to keep her emotions in check.

"So am I. Did you and Overland break up?"

"W-what?"

"What happened that day you came over to our apartment?" Aster continued. "What's going on between you three?"

"I-I don't know what you're talking about."

"Don't lie to me, Elsa Arendelle." He stepped up to her and wrapped his fingers around her upper arms. "I wanna know what's bloody goin' on."

"It's none of your business, Mr. Bunnymund!"

Aster's eyes narrowed. "I'm bloody makin' it my business! I won't let anyone get away with making my mates cry!"

"Haley cried?" Elsa narrowed her eyes clouding and glazed over darkly. "Well good! Bastard deserved it..."

Aster blinked at her words.

"Elsa? Elsa, what's going on? I heard shouting." An older woman's voice called out from the home through the door at the back of the store.

Elsa blinked and her eyes cleared. "N-nothing, mother! I... A person I know walked by... I'm sorry if I woke you." she called back, her cold eyes looking away from Aster's.

The man frowned. "I'll be leavin' then. I will be comin' back, though, because something is hurtin' more than just Hale and Overland. See ya, Snow princess."

"Wh-what did you call me?" Elsa gasped her face paling.

"Snow princess. I caught you in the snow." Aster bent to her ear, whispering. "and caught the storm in yer eyes."

"Oh." Elsa blushed and Aster walked out the door.

"Elsa, who was it? Was it Jack?"

"No-" Elsa grounded out. "Jack and I broke up yesterday."

"What? Oh I'm sorry to hear that... But is it something you can't work out dear?"

Elsa thought about the question. "No... No, I'll work it out..." she clenched her fists.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Aster scowled down at the sidewalk and dug his fists deeper into his pockets.

"Aster, bro?"

His head jerked up. His younger brother was standing before him, and Emma was standing next to him. Both were wearing faces of concern.

"Are you okay?"

"I'm right as rain, Dim. I'm just a little pissed." Aster's eyes darted to Emma's. "Do you know what's up with Hale, your bro, and

Elsa?"

Her eyes looked away. "It's not my business to tell."

Aster gritted his teeth. "What are you two doin'? Don't you have a boyfriend or sumthin'?" He ground out.

"We were having breakfast. Jay knows that."

"Hmph."

"Want us to walk you home?"

"Sure." Aster shrugged. They fell in step with him, asking about his band, his next gig, and how living with Cristoff and Hiccup was. He slowly mellowed out as they chattered on gaily.

He was still angry, though.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

"That's not too far from here. Do you we should meet up? All right, I'll see you soon, then, Jim."

"Jim?" Cristoff raised his head. "Who's that, Hale?"

"A guy I met a couple days ago." Hiccup answered, Toothless lapping at him.

"Dude, really, how many peeps did you meet in your short time being back to Burgess and you're so trusting?"

Hiccup flushed. "He seemed all right, his mom was with him when we met and he respected her enough. She let me have me their phone number so we could meet again." he explained the best he could.

"All right. I'm sure he's a great kid."

The door swung open and a livid Aster stormed in. Dimitri and Emma walked in behind him, looking concerned. Hiccup walked through the opening of the kitchen and hurried to get coffee set up. Aster followed him in with his hands dragging through his hair.

"What happened, Aster?" Cristoff asked as he walked towards the fridge for juice then pulling a high chair out from the counter to sit on.

"Apparently, Elsa and Overland have bloody broken up."

Cristoff did a perfect spit take.

"W-what?!" Hiccup squeaked. He moved away from the hot stove prudently.

Emma blinked. "There wasn't any blood! How can blood be involved in break ups?" she frowned, trying to remember if she really did see her brother this morning and it wasn't an apparition.

"It's Aussie slang, Emma." Dimitri snorted a laugh.



Aster ignored the exchange. "But she won't tell me what you two talked about." His piercing green eyes met Hiccup's vulnerable emeralds.

"It's nothing." The emerald eyes darted away.

"You and the showpony... there's something between you two. Is he the one you came to Burgess for?"

Hiccup's felt his face pale. "That's none of your business."

"Why do you blokes keep sayin' that?! It's my beeswax when my mates are getting hurt! You, Jack, Elsa, what ever is between you three is hurtin' all of you and worryin' all of us! What about Anna?!"

Hiccup looked down and his hands and sighed. "I'm going to end our attachment. She... she said something that... I can't... I feel like I'm taking advantage of her feelings. I... I know I can't feel for her the way she does for me. So, I was contemplating ending the relationship."

"This is what happens when you go head on into things," Cristoff facepalmed, muttering something. "saw that coming, damn. Well, I did warn her..."

"She's young, pretty, and very vivacious." Hiccup went on. "She'll be able to get another more suitable boyfriend than me fairly quickly." he pointed out. "I'm not good for her. I don't want to give her false hope to my feelings."

"It's because of Jack! He's sendin' you flowers for a reason! Tell me, damn it!" Aster slammed his palms down on the table's surface as he yelled angrily.

Hiccup looked up at him amazed. "Is it so important for you to know?"

"Aye! You cried, anklebiter! You cried at least three times since I've met you, and all because of that white-haired dork!"

"You need to stay out of my personal life, Bunnymund." Hiccup replied coldly.

"Bloody hell, Hale! Don't talk to me like that! I'm tryin' to help! You all are hurtin' yerselves for no reason, or for stupid reasons! The only one who seems to know what he wants is that stupid dork!"

"STOP CALLING JACK A DORK!" Hiccup finally yelled back, cheeks flushing angrily. "Do not call him that again, or any other name you want to use." Emeralds glared into Spring greens. Cristoff leaned back on the chair he sat on and fell off it as the waves of tension and anger flowed between the two young men. Emma and Dimitri stood stiffly side by side eyeing each other edgily.

The doorbell rang suddenly, making them all jump and the tension to break with the boys' gazes.

"It must be Jim." Hiccup rose from the table and the two older boys heard the front door open.

"Hey, Haley. Uh, don't take this the wrong way, it's not from me, man. But I just found this here so uh... This must be yours."

"Another one?" Hiccup's amazed voice cried out. Cristoff and Aster hurried to the foyer and peered around the young auburnette's shoulders. On the place mat next to the feet of a teen who must be \_Jim\_, sat a rather large, misshapen, handmade, jetblack dragon. On it's back lay a bouquet of peach roses again. A large note card was pinned to his almost round ear stating '\_My name is Jack, please. I love you, my Hic.\_'

Cristoff eyed the doll. "Why a dragon?" he asked to no one in particular. He scrutinized it more closely. "Looks more like your dog though then Jack."

Toothless raised his ears then lifted his head from where he laid by the fireplace.

"That's pretty awesome for a... er... showpony... to think of."

Hiccup fell to his knees, remembering the conversation he and Jack had at Astrid's convenience store, talking about random things really. He remembered mentioning that he was of Viking heritage, loved dragons and sometimes drew them. He remembered drawing him a sample, too. The Nightfury dragon.

"He made that for me? That dragon? He made it?" The auburnette stammered staring down at the misshapen doll.

"It sure does look like it." Cristoff agreed. "not done by a professional obviously."

Hiccup pulled the dragon into his arms, his cheek pressing against the top of its head. The roses fell to the ground with a light flop, petals scattering over the cement and woven mat.

"I can't believe Jack pulled that off. I told him to watch selected episodes of \_Cardcaptor Sakura\_ as a joke..." Emma muttered, her voice filled with awe and humor. \_Although I think Hiccup should really rename it to his dog's name... It really does look like...\_ she looked back and forth from the doll and the dog. \_yeah... definitely change it... if Jack wanted it named after him he should've stuck with a bear.\_

"Of course your name is Jack." Hiccup whispered.

\_Of course he's going with that...\_ Emma shook her head, amused.

"Uh Hale, you okay?"

"Fine. Don't mind me. I've been... rather emotional lately." Hiccup rose quickly to his feet, his dragon doll still in his arms and one hand clutching the roses. "Come on inside." he barely caught Dimitri nudging Emma with his elbow excitedly.

Emma muttered something under her breath to Dimitri, giggling. "Haley, who's your friend?" She smiled at the thin-ponytailed

brunette raising a brow at them.

"Oh! I'm sorry! I became sidetracked." Hiccup flushed and looked down at the stuffed dragon in his arms and the roses in his hand.

"No problem. I'm sure we can introduce ourselves just fine." Dimitri jumped in quickly. He held out his hand to Jim and smiled beautifully. "I'm Dimitri Sudayev."

Jim blinked, not given a chance to react when the guy took his hand. "Uh, yeah hey, Jim Hawkins." he managed out, slightly taken aback when the guy wouldn't let go of his hand... not after kissing it. "What the!" he pulled his hand away. "Dude!"

"It's a European thing," Dimitri winked. "don't worry about it."

"Uhhh no I think I'm gonna..."

Hiccup hummed slightly as he looked for the perfect vase for his new bouquet of roses. \_This is nice, having flowers and gifts so unexpectedly. \_He looked own at the card with a fond smile.

Aster watched him after introducing himself to Jim with narrowed eyes. \_It's said 'I love you, my Hic.' I was right. There's something between them!\_

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Jack chewed his fingernail as he frowned at the now-paused screen.

"Jack, are you going to be done soon? I don't like my living room covered in videos." Thiana's voice cut through his contemplations.

"Sorry." The teen looked up and grinned absently. "Just having a brainstorm, see what happens?"

"Jack." Thiana shook her head and smiled. "Any luck?"

"I think so. He liked the dragon, I saw. I remembered him mentioning that he was of Viking descent, loved dragons and I asked him to draw me a sample since he told me he drew 'em often. Good thing he did, so I sew him up one." He grinned. "I may get through after a couple more tries. Maybe Emma will have some info when she gets back, she was there, too."

"Oh? Good, I was wondering where she was going. Is she spending time with that Russian boy again?"

"He's not really Russian, just lived there a while and all. But Yeah." He suddenly frowned as something occured to him. "Mom?"

"Yes sweet tooth?"

"How m'I going to top that dragon?"

Thiana laughed.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Jim was puzzled with this Dimitri guy who kept brushing accidentally against his arm. He was almost sure this guy was hitting on him, but that can't be right. While he's been openly bi for a while, no one ever really gave him the time of day. So how can a guy, an admittedly handsome looking one too, who lived at Russia for the most part of his life nonetheless, probably met some pretty European girls, be interested in a plain, troubled teenager whom was also fatherless?

\_Not that he knew that of course...\_

His arm was burning where Dimitri's fingers had brushed against him. Jim noticed the the reddish brown hair was combed nicely but his bangs still made a messy movement when the teen made the slightest movement. Dimitri was not that older than Jim was but there was an air about him that made him seem like a man already. As if he was a gentleman but somehow, Jim felt, underneath that the guy had a sly streak in him. A theory that was proven when Dimitri asked Jim to stand up for a second and when Jim agreed, albeit confused, Dimitri stood up too and circulated him.

"Wha-Why are you circling me?" Jim crossed his arms. "what, are you a vulture in another life?"

Dimitri chuckled and sat back down. "Just checking something out," he said nonchalantly.

"Whatever," Jim rolled his eyes, sitting back down.

"So kid, you're only thirteen?"

"No, I just turned fourteen." Jim scowled. "And don't call me a kid, jeez. You're not much older wiseguy."

"Right, sorry. But you're so cute, it's misleading." Dimitri smiled charmingly and Jim choked on his saliva, blushing furiously.

\_He is definitely hitting on me! \_Strangely enough, this didn't bother Jim even though the guy was little obnoxious.

"But there are some things mature about you, too. Like your eyes, so serious, and then there's your mouth, too."

\_He's looking at my mouth? At my eyes?\_ Jim felt flustered by the sudden admiration and appraisal.

Everybody but Hiccup, Dimitri, and Jim were trying hard not to smile as Jim gazed, silent and befuddled, up at Dimitri, still flushing slightly.

"Would anybody like coffee?" Hiccup abruptly asked, rising from his sitting position on the living room floor.

More chuckles, from Jim and Dimitri as well, were suppressed. Everybody still had full cups from the first three times Hiccup had refilled their cups when really he wanted to check on his roses.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

\_Your secrets won't last long\_ Aster thought to himself watching Hiccup leave with Jim. It was time for him to head back and help his mom out at the diner. His younger brother rose after the door closed and helped Emma to her feet. He smiled happily at her.

"Let's go, Emma. I need to talk to you."

"As usual." Emma poked his side, but willingly put her hand in his and walked towards the door. "We have to go to Jay's like I promised."

"Yeah, yeah." He sighed with annoyance-earning himself another poke in the side.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Jamie looked out his window as boredom began to loom unbearably. He went snowboarding with his friends, but Jack was missing again. After a refreshing shower, all that was left to the day was nothing, besides a '\_maybe\_' visit from Emma. She had called the night before to say she would be spending a lot of time with Dimitri starting with breakfast, but since he was going to be chilling out with his friends, it was okay. Until the sun was close to setting and she never showed up to spend the rest of the evening cuddling and watching a movie on the brand-new TV in his room.

His brown eyes fell upon two figures walking hand-in-hand and rushed to the window. Sure enough, it was Dimitri and Emma, laughing and talking. They neared the entrance and turned to face each other. Jamie watched with amazement as a strange scene met his eyes.

Dimitri had captured Emma's hands with his own and was bent over a little to meet her eyes. She shook her head and he let her go and gripped his hair. He swung back around and cupped her face with his hands. She pulled his hands away laughing and said something. They began to spin around, holding each other's hands tightly. Then, they stopped, almost collapsing, and, to Jamie's horror, Dimitri instinctively wrapped his arms around her waist, they laughed again and he kissed her at her cheek, but it was too dark that it could be misunderstood from anyone who was watching. Emma pulled away and threw back her head to laugh.

Something broke inside Jamie's chest.

\_What just happened? What happened? Did she keep something from me again? Did she lie? Is she secretly with that guy? What's going on? I'm so confused!\_ Jamie pushed away from the window and spun around. He clenched his fists and stared at the floor, breathing deeply. It took all of his willpower to not throw his new TV into the wall out of sheer confusion. "WHAT'S GOING ON?" Jamie screamed.

Behind him, Dimitri and Emma separated and waved.

\*\*Author's Note: \*\*\_\*\*'Yes, I know it's true, that visions are seldom all they seem...' \*\*\_\*\*So yeah XD It's not what it seems. But feel free to flame Emma, but not too harshly. I know someone who would flame this scene for Emma's secrecy. (\*cough cough\* Paoshirou Hozomi \*cough)\*\*

## 8. My Guardian Tears

**\*\*Author's Note:** I'm messing with the weather here and mother nature a lot, aren't I? Well whatever. It's fanfiction, anything goes. If you people love Elsa to death, then beware of this chapter cause I'm going to make her seem hateful. I don't despise Elsa, but this is all for the sake of the storyline's progression. Enjoy**\*\***

**\*\*Disclaimer:** I don't own anything. **\*\***

**\*\*My Guardian\*\***

**\*\*Chapter Eight\*\***

**\*\*My Guardian Tears\*\***

Hiccup ate his a freshly made hashbrown slowly, wincing a bit at the hotness that seemed to burn his tongue. He swallowed a mouthful, let out a loud sigh, and turned to his companions, helping themselves to their own snacks, fries and an apple pie. They ordered take out from a McDonalds.

"You two knew each other?" Hiccup smiled bemused. "Well, Jim did mention being around town to visit a family friend when we first met."

Jim shook his head. "No, my mom and I visited this astrophysicist. Although yeah, we did first meet at her family's convenience store. It just wasn't her shift that time and I didn't bother to say hello."

"Such a small world." Astrid said sagely. Hiccup chuckled. "So, how are you and Jack?" She took a bite off her apple pie.

"Jack? The one the dragon was named after?" Jim asked with confusion. "Speaking of, you should really rename it. I think it looked more like your dog."

"What dragon? Like a Komodo Dragon giant lizard thing? You have a Komodo dragon? I didn't know you could have them for pets."

Hiccup couldn't help but laugh again. "I guess I have a few stories to tell." he conceded, finishing off his snack.

**\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\***

Jack knocked on Hiccup's apartment door. Cristoff answered it with a bemused smile. "Afternoon, Jack." His eyes looked down at the bouquet of roses in Jack's hand. "Hale went out already."

Jack's eyes became dark, and he felt his fingers tightened around the rose stems. "I thought I told you not to-Agh, and is he still dating Anna?"

"Technically, yes..." Cristoff trailed off and eyed Jack's angry visage. "But he mentioned last night he was going to break up with her."

Jack barely suppressed a grin, not knowing how much lighter his eyes became. Cristoff studied Jack carefully. "Really? Maybe... did he say anything... like why he was going to?"

"He said, um..." Cristoff scratched his head to remember, "'I can't feel the same way about her as she does about me,' or something like that." he answered with a thoughtful frown. "He went out with this Jim guy and Astrid girl an hour ago, however. I don't think he met up with Anna."

"Jim? Astrid?"

"A young man we all met yesterday-"

"The kid that that gave the dragon to show Hiccup!" Jack exclaimed as it hit him.

"Hiccup? Uh, Hale? Uh... Wait, you made someone a delivery boy without knowing his name?" Cristoff squinted his eyes, wondering why he was surrounded with people who kept rushing into things. "Uh... oh and Astrid is this blond girl."

"Blond... with a braid?"

"Yeah."

"That girl from the convenience store! That's so weird!" Jack muttered looking down to his full hands. "Right. Here." He thrust the bouquet in Cristoff's face and shoved a large box of strawberry mochi into his chest.

"For me?"

"NO! For Hiccup! Just give them to him, okay? And tell him that roses aren't so cheap. I'm not gonna have much allowance left and it'll be awhile before he'll get more soon." Jack mumbled staring down at the ground and blushing.

Cristoff took the gifts and politely hid a smile. "I'll tell him, don't worry about it. I think he likes strawberries, too. His mom bought him some before she left."

"They reminded me of his face especially when he blushes, the red and his freckles are like a strawberry..." Jack mumbled lower as his blush deepened.

Cristoff couldn't keep the smile back, thankfully Jack refused to meet his gaze. "Should I tell him that too?"

"No! I mean, you don't have to, or anything!" Jack looked up, caught the teasing smile, and gulped. "Uhhhyeahbye!" Jack ran for it, his breath coming in gasps and his eyes closed tight.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Elsa finished with her shift early in the shop and left her mom and Anna to do the rest, going into her room to do a little research. A research on how to deal with prosthetics and take them off. She didn't know what to do with the information yet, but thought it might be useful to know for whatever she comes up with. She was engrossed

in her research that she didn't hear the persistent knocks to her door. When it was clear that she wasn't going to answer, the person behind let themselves in. It was her father.

"Elsa, dear, what are you doing?"

Elsa yelped, almost falling from her computer chair. "Dad, what are you doing here? I thought you left for work."

"I still have time and came to talk. I've been knocking for a while."

She faced her dad, flushing. "S-sorry, dad, I didn't hear you knocking..."

"That's all right, dear. Now speak to me, are you all right? Your mom told me you and Jack broke up,"

Elsa clenched her fist, wrinkling her skirt, looking down to it. "N-no, I-I just... We're just in a rut right now, and I-I'm trying to sort it out..."

"Dearest," her father sat on her bed, beckoning Elsa to go by his side. She got up from her chair and sat next to him. "I know we told you that you have to better handle your emotions, and to hide them, but that doesn't necessarily mean you should ignore them. You should speak to us if you're hurting."

Elsa shook her head. "I don't want to hurt you," she rubbed her hands, biting her lip as she remembered shattering a glass vase intricately designed with snowflakes and a ruining a wedding portrait when she first threw a tantrum after her recovery. "I-I don't want that to happen again..."

"It's okay to be scared, and it's not wrong that you love Jack. But if he ended things, if that's his decision, you have to let it be. You'll have to let him go."

Elsa's lip trembled. "J-Jack didn't break up with me... I-I did, I broke up with him-he-he was being insensitive..." \_because Haley came back made him reject me...\_ "but it's not his fault..." \_It's not his fault... It's Haley's...\_ "so I-I'm trying to fix it." ...\_I won't let him take Jack away from me that easy... \_"It's all right dad, I can fix it, I can fix it."

Her dad smiled wearily, worried. He knew his daughter would never break up with Jack, not even for a while, not even if he was being annoying or insensitive or all those other flaws of youthful foolishness that were reasons his ex-girlfriends back in high school days ditched him. He knew how much his daughter loved the boy, because they were friends before her condition affected her life and during the whole ordeal. So he wondered why she was lying to herself.

"Make sure you just don't break yourself, Elsa." he cupped her cheek. "and you'll be fine."

Elsa didn't reply to that, simply hugging her snowman doll and going back to the computer.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*



Emma frowned a little. "Are you sure this is a good idea? I would really just like to tell him."

"You can't!" Dimitri gasped turning around to meet her gaze with wild eyes. "Emma, I don't want anybody to know just yet" he bit his lip and looked away. "Do you think I'm a bad person for wanting to keep it secret?"

"Oh, Dimitri!" Emma rushed forward and wrapped her arms around his waist, her nose pressed against his chest. He looked down at her with surprise barely keeping his footing. "I don't think any such thing! I know exactly why. I've seen it so close to me... the pain, and the lies, and the poison people can cause. I know why... it's just hurting my heart so much, Dimitri, keeping it silent from him."

"I'm so sorry, Emma." Dimitri wrapped his arms around her and laid his head on hers with a smile. "I'm sure it won't be long now. I... I'll try my best. Please, just a little more time. It hurts me, too, having this secret burn into me like this."

Emma nodded against his shirt. "I'm sure... I'm sure everything will work out fine." she whispered. \_I just hope I don't hurt Jay...\_

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

"Soooo you dumped him before it even started?" Astrid slowly summarized, eyes flashing dangerously.

"Well... yes" Hiccup stared down at his feet.

"You are an idiot." Astrid sighed. She tossed the crumbled red cardboard packaging her apple pie came with. She stretched out her long legs onto the jogging path in front of their bench and blithely ignored the glares of joggers who had to move out of her feet's way.

"I like to think I helped him." Hiccup muttered.

"But isn't he still giving you flowers? He even made you a dragon... however misshapen it is." Jim pointed out.

"I think it's just fine." Hiccup defended staunchly. \_Even if it is a bit misshapen.\_ He thought with a smile.

"Not the point, point is-he's still trying to convince you you're perfect for each other. And I think he's right." Astrid said with a sigh.

"You just want to see them make out, Astrid." Jim smiled.

She smiled back. "Nooooo I just want to see idiots stop being idiots."

"Sort of defeats the purpose of them being called idiots."

"All right, I get it." Hiccup rolled his eyes at their ganging up on him. "I'm an idiot."

"On a completely off-related topic, you're having a party right

Astrid?"

"A small get-together than anything else really."

"A party?" Hiccup inquired. "what for?"

"No special reason. You can come, but-" She looked him straight in the eye, "Only if you bring Jack, too."

"WHAT?" Hiccup squawked.

"Yup."

"I can't just-just ask him to go out with me!"

"You're right." Jim agreed. Hiccup sighed with relief. "You have to break up with this Anna girl first."

"WHAAAT?" Astrid laughed as Hiccup wrenched his neck around so fast he pulled some muscles. "OOOW!"

"Maybe you should get on that. It's only five or so." Astrid clucked, checking her wristwatch.

"I can't just show up on her doorstep and say-\_sorry, we're broken up.\_"

"You might have to, looks like rain." Jim said as he looked up.

The other two looked up as well and saw clouds begin to form and block the sun's rays.

"Amazing how Burgess snows year around but in can still rain at summer and spring time," Jim snickered. "wow, that's irony right there."

Hiccup groaned, thinking about his predicament.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Elsa and Anna were sitting on Anna's bed sipping hot cocoa and watching the clouds get thicker by late afternoon.

"What did you want to talk about, Elsa? You seem upset." Anna rubbed her sister's back soothingly.

Elsa sets her half-empty cup down on the nightstand. "I know it's going to hurt you a lot. But it's for your own good to know." \_I can't have my sister to be with him either, he deserves to be alone...\_

"What... What are you talking about?"

"Haley."

"Haley? What about Haley?"

"He's Hiccup."

Anna blinked. "Hiccup? Who's Hiccup?"

"The memory Jack told us about a long time ago. We met him to, years ago, but you were too younger than me to remember."

"Isn't... Isn't that the girl Jack thought he was in love with?" Anna whispered, her eyes widening.

"Yes and no." Anna had the mad urge to clap her hand over Elsa's mouth. She barely restrained herself and clutched her long green skirt with trembling fingers. "Hiccup isn't a girl, and he is the one in love with Jack. It's one-sided."

"E-Elsa?"

"Anna," Elsa faced her sister. "just beware of him. He's no good for any of us," she stood up and silently left the room.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

After a moment of silent contemplation and confusion, a knock came to Anna's bedroom door made the girl jump.

"Y-Yes?"

"Anna, there's a boy at the front door for you." Her mom poked her head in. "He says he has something important to say, but he can't stay long because of the storm."

Anna looked up with frightened eyes. She opened her door and thanked her mother automatically. It seemed miles away, the door, where she knew with heart-breaking clarity Hiccup stood waiting for her. Waiting to tell her what he really meant when he told her '\_maybe\_'. And then, the door was there, just barely ajar, with Haley standing inside the foyer with an uncomfortable look on his face.

"H-Haley?" Her voice trembled and her face was pale.

"Are you okay?" Hiccup blinked. "you looked sick, do you have a fever?"

"Just... just tell me, Haley."

"What happened?" He darted forward with concern etched into his soft face. His face framed with auburn hair and filled with emerald eyes.

She barely held back a sob. "You l-love him, too, don't you? You're here... you're here to tell me you love him." She whispered.

"H-how-What are you talking about?" Hiccup looked mortified.

A thunder clapped.

Anna heard the '\_how\_', and knew what question he didn't finish. "How did I know? How did I find out, right? That's what you want to know? It doesn't matter!" She was suddenly screaming and tears were flowing down her cheeks. "I-I thought it was going to be real love for me! I thought you'd love me, too! It was just a lie! You just don't want anyone to know you're gay!"

"N-no, no, no, no I-I didn't s-say that! I didn't mean a-anything like that!" Hiccup fumbled with his words teeth chattering at the cold from the storm that started while reaching for her.

She pulled away and glared at him, eyes glowing with anger and something very, very close to hate. "Don't you touch me, you faggot!"

"A-An-Anna..." Hiccup backed away as if burnt. "I didn't want to hurt you."

"JUST GO AWAY! I HATE YOU!" Anna turned and ran, pressing her hands to her eyes, and sobbing hysterically.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Jamie waited until she was almost passing him before he stood from the bench. "EEK! Oh, god, Jamie! You scared me!" Emma gasped. She adjusted her bag on her shoulder and then blushed, as if she just realized it was there.

"Where ya going?" Jamie asked, trying for nonchalant and failing as his voice cracked.

"To... to a friend's." her voice whispered.

"Who, Emma?" His voice was low and almost brutal with its intensity.

"To Dimitri's. We're going to go to a late movie and I thought I should... um... bring some snacks..." Her voice trailed off.

"A backpack full of them? Wow, Dimwit must eat a lot because I know you don't."

"His name is Dimitri."

"I don't care!" His voice left in its wake a ringing silence in the park. Rain fell with a small, light thud.

"How did you know I'd be here?"

"You have to walk through here to get to the train station from your house. When your mom told me you were going over to Pippa's house, a girl you haven't spoken to since third grade, I knew you had lied and raced down here."

Emma knew he lived right next to the park, and didn't doubt he had just gotten there without running out of breath. She also knew she was caught in another lie and it didn't look good. "I... had to lie to my mom or I wouldn't be able to leave." Emma explained.

"Where are you really going?" Jamie's voice was so calm, so even, so suddenly.

Emma took a deep breath. "I'm going to Dimitri's to spend the night."

"That's nice." Jamie crossed his arms over his chest. "Why?"

"I... I can't tell you."

Jamie's eyes narrowed. "You can't tell me again? I thought we were going to be honest from now on?"

"I told you I can't tell you-"

"Why were you two kissing yesterday?"

"W-what?" Emma's face paled.

"I saw you! What is going on?" Jamie grabbed her upper arms and pulled her closer. "Tell me!"

"I told you I can't! Just give me a little time!"

"Time to do what? Time for Dimitri to dump his girlfriend, too, huh?"

"He doesn't have a girlfriend," \_He's trying to get a boyfriend but I can't tell you that he's even gay!\_ "and you'll take your hands off of me right now!"

Jamie's hands let her go so violently she stumbled. "Then, WHY ARE YOU LYING TO ME?" he roared. Emma watched in horror as tears began to stream down his tanned face. "I've been trying to really good about this, but ever since you met that stupid russian dude you've been ditching and lying to me." His hands fell to his sides and clenched into fists and he closed his eyes as tears fell. "You've never lied to me before."

"Jamie... I just can't... Jamie..."

"Can't what? Tell me the truth? Help me understand; help me believe you when you tell me you still want to be with me!" Jamie sobbed. "Just tell me, Emma!"

"I can't tell you!"

"WHY NOT?" He bellowed.

"It's not my secret."

"I don't care! Just tell me!"

"You need to stay out of my business! I don't have to tell you anything if I don't want to! You should just trust me!" Emma finally shouted back, her last thread breaking. There was only so much prying she could take, and for him to ask her to break a confidante because he was too insecure to trust her, then screw him.

"Oh, so now I can't know what you're doing when you make out with other guys?"

"GOD! I didn't make out with anyone-"

"Especially not me."

"It was a simple kiss between friends!"

"He lifted you off your feet, spun you around, and kissed you on the mouth!"

"NOOO! It was on the cheek!"

"Didn't look that way to me!"

"It was dark duh! Why didn't you talk to me right after it happened!?"

"I thought you would, Ms. I'll-never-lie-to-you-again! 'I'll just forget to mention when I kiss another guy\_'!"

"Would you just get over it! I shouldn't have to cater to your every whine because you have no self-confidence. I don't cheat on my boyfriends!"

"You've never had more than one! If you don't recall, you were an uppity little brat and ignored everybody who told you they loved you!"

"No, only you, because you were an annoying heel-licker!" Once again silence fell. Emma's hand pressed against her lips as if to push her harsh words back in. The rain began to fall harder and her light brown hair got darker and heavier with water. Rain dripped off of Jamie's nose, indistinguishable from his tears.

"I knew it..."

"Jamie... I didn't mean it... please"

"Just go to your little russian's house and make out again." Jamie's voice dripped with venom.

"No... Jamie... please."

"You know... how many times have you told me you loved me?" Jamie whispered. "Sometimes... I thought you really didn't and just felt sorry for me. Then, that pretty boy comes wandering up and... you haven't said it since"

"Jamie..."

"We're over! We're over, damn it! You just leave me the hell alone!" Jamie screamed over the thunder that boomed through the sky.

"Jam-"

"GO AWAY!"

Emma turned and ran, her body framed with light as lightning flashed through the clouds.

Jamie sobbed, his hands still clenched tightly at his sides. His feet shuffled through the puddles caused by the pouring rain. Finally, a bench loomed from the gloom and sheets of rain. He sat down and buried his face in his hands, and sobbed, his shoulders shaking with his weeping. His hair fell into his eyes.

"H-how could I have dumped Emma? Emma! I dumped Emma. What am I going to do?"

Suddenly, the rain stopped and he looked up. A pretty girl with blond hair stood over him. She held an umbrella that had stopped the rain. "You're going to get pneumonia. Why don't we walk you home?"

"What? No... I'm fine."

"You aren't fine. You've obviously been crying and you're soaking wet. Get up and stop being stupid."

"SHUT UP AND LEAVE ME ALONE, YOU NOSY BRAT!" Jamie shouted at the bossy, blond.

Astrid huffed indignantly. "You're not much older than me, and you've got the bratty attitude." she snapped. She didn't have time for this, she had to get back to the store, it was almost time for her shift. "you better get your bum back home."

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Hiccup had stood proven for a while before he finally found the ability to move. He went out into the rain head on, walking in some daze. It didn't matter if he was to out of it to be soaked or not. He didn't bring an umbrella, anyway.

\_Nobody... nobody's ever spoken to me that way before. Nobody's ever called me a 'faggot'\_. Hiccup's numb mind thought blankly. \_Of course, only my parents have ever known but still.\_

Hiccup was not paying any attention to his surroundings, even when something suddenly slammed against him and hurled him into a wall. His mind was too numb, he didn't know what to think. The only thing he could register was rain pouring down to his body.

"You deserved that..."

\_What...? Who is that...? Who's speaking...? \_His eyes were half-lidded, puffy from crying tears that the rain disguised. \_Did I say that out loud...?\_

Hiccup wasn't aware of what was going on, not aware of the figure messing with his pants, not noticing when his prosthetic was being taken off and thrown off a few feet away, then continued rolling off.

"You took him from me, it's your fault... \*sob\* \*sob\* it's your... f-fault..."

"Haley? HALEY!"

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Elsa stared down at her handiwork, panting heavily as if what she did took a lot out from her, uncaring of the rain pouring down heavily on her shoulders. "You deserved that..."

He didn't respond. Maybe that was better off. Elsa got to work,

trying to find the leg which she was sure was faked. When she folded the left pant leg, she saw the metallic prosthetic and got to work in removing it furiously.

\_Let's see you try run and get back to Jack's arms without this!\_

She got the thing off, and stood straight, hurling the item away in rage, glaring down at the guy slowly losing his consciousness, feeling a self-satisfied smirk form on her face. But unbeknownst to her, mistaking it for rain, tears were pouring down her eyes.

"You took him from me, it's your fault... \*sob\* \*sob\* it's your... f-fault..." she sniffed. Suddenly, she jolts, hearing a cry.

"HALEY!"

Thanking the downpour for the visibility, she rushed back into her house, and ran straight to the bathroom without anyone noticing. After freshening up, she went upstairs to head to her room, feeling drained and thinking it would be a good idea to turn in early for the night.

That's when she stopped at Anna's door, and heard her still crying. "Anna? Anna, are you still crying over-?" Elsa went in, going towards her sister.

"YOU, TOO! GET OUT!" Anna screamed. "You knew too, so GET OUT! I HATE YOU ALL! ALL OF YOU KNEW AND NOBODY TOLD ME! GET OUT!" she screamed, tears streaming from her face.

Shell-shocked, Elsa hurriedly left, tears filling her own eyes. She leaned her back against the wall, reflecting on what she had just done. She choked on her tears, pressing a hand against her mouth.

"Elsa?"

Elsa looked towards the stairs and sees her father coming up, a briefcase on his hand, coming home from work.

"D-da-daddy..."

"Elsa..." Her father recognized that tone, her daughter only ever used it when she was like a fragile child again. "what have you done?"

"I \*sob\* \*sob\* daddy... I-I think I did it again..." Elsa's sniffled, crying her eyes out. Her father placed his brief case down, opening his arms out, Elsa ran towards them. "Daddy!"

Her father stroked her hair. "Shh, shh, snow princess, it's okay... It'll be okay..."

"No, it's not, dad." Elsa buried her face to her father's chest. "Jack... he didn't dump me just be-because of s-someone else. He br-broke up with me because he wasn't happy and I was forcing him to try."

"I had no idea. I'm sorry."

Elsa shook her head. "I di-didn't want anyone to k-know, not even



myself, that I cou-couldn't make the b-boy I've been in love with for ye-years feel the same about me." she closed her eyes as tears welled up on her eyelashes. She tried breathing properly. "I should've just broken up with him and kept all these horrible things from happening." She whispered. "Daddy, I've messed up really bad. Because of me... I don't think Jack is going to happy for a really long time. I've hurt the person he truly loves really badly, and now they aren't together."

"Does Jack know about this?" Elsa shook her head, a tear falling down her cheek slowly. Her father tried to smile as he made his daughter face him. "Maybe... maybe the only way to help him now is to tell him the truth, the whole truth. Sometimes, doing the right thing is going to hurt you the worst, but you have to do it, or you'll never be happy, and neither will your friends."

Elsa nodded, but she was scared. But for once, this wasn't about her. "All right... I'll... I'll try my best, daddy, but I don't know if I'm strong enough."

"You will be, my snow princess, you will be." Her father whispered into her hair as Elsa bit down on her lip to keep from crying.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Jack watched the rain fall hard and fast onto the balcony. The sky was split as a jagged bolt of lightning streaked through the heavy, dark clouds. He jumped a bit as the thunder cracked right over head and startled him. It was great, watching the heavens just bellow and rage with all their fury. He had never been afraid of storms, instead, they helped him calm down, or sometimes even helped him sleep at night. He was looking forward to the deep slumber the raging storm never failed to invoke.

He rose and glanced at the clock with surprise. Only eight 'o' clock and he was yawning, ready to hit the hay.

He almost missed the knock for the thunder. Doubting that he had really heard anything, he walked to the foyer and peered out of the peephole. Surprise made him pull back and blink.

"No way." He threw open the door and stared down.

"Go-good evening." Elsa stuttered dripping wet and eyes bloodshot.

"Whoa! What are you doing outside in this?" Jack exclaimed. He pulled her inside and rushed down the hall to get a fresh towel. He hurried back and began rubbing down her sopping wet hair.

"If you'd stop being so worrisome, I'd answer your question."

"Just get a little more dry." Jack absently replied concentrating on her hair.

"You're making me feel worse..." Elsa whispered.

"What?"

"I... I need to tell you something important, Jack. You're... you're

not going to like it... or me." Elsa pushed the towel back into his hands. "Please, listen."

"All right." Jack looked at her with confusion.

"You... have to understand that I'm truly sorry. I... Everybody wants to be happy, Jack... I just... tried to be happy the wrong way." Elsa backed towards the door again and closed her eyes. "Jack... ever since you've remembered Hiccup, I've remembered him, too. I knew all along he was a boy."

"Yeah, I knew, too. I just didn't want him to be."

"I know... and I didn't help, did I? I did worse than not... encouraging you and helping you realize it wasn't bad what you were feeling for him."

"What do you mean, you did worse?" A suspicion began to creep into Jack's mind.

"I-I went to Hiccup-san's apartment after... after the day we lost him when Anna and him were on their first date. You remember? They had just left a movie and he ran away?"

"Y-Yeah... of course I remember." Jack swallowed, "What did you do, Elsa?"

"I... I told him that dating you would screw you up, Jack. I told him you'd get hurt and hazed and your family might hate you. I told him Anna wanted to be with him and it would hurt her more than anything for him to break up with her before she got a real chance! I said so many things I thought were true! I didn't do it because of them! I was selfish and horrible, but it was too late, I had already said them and he felt so bad and he couldn't stop. I... I'm sorry, Jack. It's my fault you aren't together. I lied..." Elsa twisted her fingers nervously and stared hard at the ground. "And that's n-not all I did... I hurt him, I..." she shook her head, explaining everything else that she did. She pinched her eyes shut, waiting for Jack to do something, maybe hit her, she knew she deserved it.

After a long moment of silence, Elsa looked up with apprehensive eyes. Jack was staring, just staring with cold eyes getting darker and darker.

"J-Jack?"

"Let me get the phone."

"W-what?"

"You need to get home, now, and you aren't walking in that."

"I-I... My dad's down waiting for me so..."

"Good," Elsa flinched when Jack spat at her. He left, disappearing into the darkness of his apartment. "cause I'm sooo glad I'm not the one taking you home."

When Jack came back out, he didn't acknowledge her, only ran out into the rain with something in his hands. Elsa ignored the tears flowing

down her face for the second time that day and turned to the door and left to where her father was waiting in a car to take her home.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Astrid was just finished with her shift, and she glanced at her wristwatch as she ran out to the rain, an umbrella keeping her somewhat dry. Throughout her shift she's been thinking of that guy, he wasn't able to get him off his mind. Her father, Gobber Belch Hofferson, noticed her fidgety and thrust an umbrella to her, telling her to do whatever to get the worry out of her system.

So now here she was, hurrying through the park seconds later, hoping he wouldn't be there and hoping he would. Then, the bench came in sight and Astrid could just barely see a hunch-over figure. Her heart skipped a bit and her feet moved faster, jumping over deeper puddles and skirting more shallow ones.

"HEY! You ready to go home yet?"

The boy jerked awake and blinked owlshly up at her. "Go away." He mumbled sleepily.

"YOU FELL ASLEEP!?" She gawked. "YOU IDIOT! GET UP RIGHT NOW! I'M TAKING YOU HOME!" She grasped his arm and pulled him to his feet.

"You can't just manhandle me!"

"Womanhandle, I'm womanhandling you, get it right." Astrid corrected arrogantly, pulling Jamie along.

"I live that way, dork."

"Fine." She turned to her left and began marching that way. "You call me a dork again, and I'll start screaming your ear off."

"God, you're more demanding than my mom..."

"I am demanding, yes. I'm very good at it."

"I hate you."

"Oh yes, I know. Now, stop whining you big baby and move it!"

"Ugh."

\*\*Author's Note: I'm conflicted with the pairings right now... Do you guys want me to change or do you want to see how Jamie and Emma will get back together? It won't be for a while though \*\*

## 9. My Guardian Returns

\*\*Author's Note: Okaaaaay, depending on the length of each reviews after this, will decide if I will still keep updating daily. I'll take it slow now. Oh, I will tally what you guys prefer. I'm not sure if it'll affect the story buuuut here based on the reviews:\*\*

**\*\*Jamma (JamieXEmma) - I\*\***

**\*\*Jamstrid (JamieXAstrid) - I\*\***

**\*\*Disclaimer: I own nothing\*\***

**\*\*My Guardian\*\***

**\*\*Chapter Nine\*\***

**\*\*My Guardian Return\*\***

"HALEY!" Jim dropped his board and ran towards the fallen figure of his friend, then stopped short when he saw the assailant escaping. "HEY YOU CREEP GET BACK HERE!"

The figure just made a run for it continuously, and Jim cursed the weather, the visibility so bad it was all he can do to reach and find his friend's body. Dropping the umbrella, he got on his knees to see the damage. Nothing seemed broken and the mess on his face didn't seem anything more than dirt smudges, thankfully not bruises. The worse part was that he was missing something,

"Crap!" Jim felt like vomitting, seeing the missing limb. "H-how is that not bleeding?! How did that come off?!" he was speechless, shell-shocked, unsure what to do and how to approach this. Luckily, the rain was calming down a bit.

Unluckily, he heard strange voices. "Woah, well, what do we have here?" Jim looked up, his body tensing and his mouth forming a scowl, seeing a spiky redhead with several other guys flanking his sides. "The diner busboy~"

"Scroop..." Jim grounded out. The older boy was always a thorn in his side, there first meeting at gym class and the redhead almost strangled him to death when they got into a nasty fight. "did you do this, bastard?!"

Scroop snorted. "Methinks ya better watch that mouth of yours," he crossed his arms.

"AHHH!" Jim charged, harassing him was one thing, but picking on his friends was a whole other thing. "SCREW YOU!"

Scroop rolled his eyes and as soon as Jim reached him, he ducked from Jim's incoming blow and threw his own right at the brunette's gut. Jim gagged, collapsing till his arms were grabbed by the redhead's companions before Scroop grabbed the front of Jim's shirt and pushed him up against the wall. Jim struggled, kicking and trying fruitlessly to get down. How the redhead can keep him prop up against the wall amidst the rain was unfathomable.

"Maybe if ya beg, I'll let you off easy," Jim glared down at the redhead, gurgling enough saliva to spit at his face. Scroop looked outraged, "have it yar way! Say your last words-" Scroop pulled his hand back. "... cause I'm gonna pound your face in, Busboy!"

Suddenly, a \_klank \_sound was heard, Jim dropped to the ground,

gasping for breath while Scroop was knocked away. "Wanna bet?!" With an unknown weapon, the newcomer pounded Scroop and his crew, dodging counters and retaliations and going all out. "YEAH YOU BETTER RUN!"

Jim shook his dazed state away, before raising his head to see his rescuer. "Dimitri?" he blinked.

"Hey, Jim," he picked up Jim's fallen umbrella and placed it directly over them, "what're you doing out this late with those guys?"

"I wasn't with them, I was-HALEY!"

"Eh?" Dimitri blinked as Jim scrambled to his feet and off. "Hey, wait a minute, at least say thank you-oh!"

Jim pulled Hiccup's arm over his shoulders. "I have to get him back to the apartment,"

"Make that we," Dimitri took Hiccup's one other arm, pulling over his own shoulders adjusting so that he can help in carrying while still holding the umbrella. "I'll help."

"Thanks... Eh? What's that in your under your arm?"

Dimitri looked at the item. "I think it's Haley's prosthetic... Bro mentioned something about it. It makes a good weapon," he said trivially.

Jim blinked, realizing that whoever attacked Haley must've plotted something, because they knew how to take off a prosthetic. \_But why would anyone... \_and that's when the rain started pouring down hard on them once again. "CRAP!"

"HURRY!"

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Feet slammed again and again on the wet cement. Water flew up into the air as the flashing white sneakers splashed unthinkingly through puddles.

\_Almost there, I'm almost there...\_

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

"The hell, Dim, Jim?!-you're both soakin' wet!"

Cristoff gawked. "What happened to Hale?!"

"I'm not sure what happened," Dimitri answered as Aster helped Jim support Hiccup, giving him the chance to fold the umbrella. He gave Cristoff the prosthetic. "I was running to get out of the rain when I heard a rackus, after getting Jim out of the situation, we went to help Haley."

"Let's get 'im to the couch. Cristoff, get him some change of clothes." Aster said as they brought him to the living room couch. Cristoff disappeared to Hiccup's room, Toothless rushing out and barking, whimpering at the sight of his master in worry. Aster stood

straight, frowning down at the unconscious male. \_Bloody hell happened to ya, anklebiter?\_

Jim frowned. "He's pretty roughed up. Is he gonna be okay?" Cristoff returned with the clothes, handing the two other wet preteens towels.

"Aye, we'll make sure o' it. Ya two should run along and get home, it's late. I know for a fact it's almost passed yer curfew, Dim." Aster got to work changing Hiccup into dryer clothes, trying to get the dog from getting in his way.

Dimitri scowled. "Yeah, yeah, mom~ I'm going..." he tossed the now wet towel towards his brother.

"Oy!"

"Okay, call if you need anything." Jim said, handing the towel back to the blond and taking his umbrella from Dimitri, heading out. He was half way down the flight of stairs when he felt a hand to his shoulder. "Huh, what's up?"

"You all right?"

Jim raised a brow at Dimitri. "Uh aren't you asking the wrong person that question?"

"Well can't exactly get an answer from a half-dead person," Dimitri said pointedly, smirking. Jim rolled his eyes. "Besides, you were roughed up a bit too, weren't you? Who were those dicks?"

"Bunch of jerks from school, bane to my middle school existance. But that's what happens when you're not normal... I'm bisexual." Jim added at Dimitri's questioning gaze.

"Really?"

"Yeah. There a problem?" Jim shrugged, going down the remaining steps.

\_Nope, no problem at all. Not a one... \_Dimitri kept himself from grinning like a kid on Christmas day. "Nah, I'm down with that. It's cool," he pocketed his hands, laughing. Jim beckoned him closer, unfolding his umbrella as they went back out to the rain. Dimitri happily obliged.

"Oh, thanks for earlier, by the way."

"No problem, man. But damn, you sure need to learn how to pick your fights more carefully. Didn't your pops teach you that?"

Jim stiffened, stopping in his tracks. So did Dimitri, realizing he struck a nerve.

"Er, is he not that type?"

Jim looked away, scowling. "No, he's more like the \_Taking off and never showing his damn face again\_ type."

"Oh, uh, sorry man."

Jim shrugged, forcing nonchalance. He continued walking again, "Not a big deal. Doing just fine." even as he said this, he fell silence. So did Dimitri.

After a while only, though. "Hey Jim?"

"Hm?"

"Want to hang out sometimes?"

"Huh?"

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Outside, the rain was acting up again, and Hiccup begun stirring, his eyes fluttered open slowly. He made a sound, and Toothless was on him in a heartbeat. "Wah! Toothlesssss!" he sat up, blinking when he realized he was home.

"Hale! You're awake!"

"Cristoff?" Hiccup pushed Toothless down. "What happened?"

"You tell us. Jim and Dimitri brought you over, and you were practically half-dead. Jim was worried wanted to make sure you were okay, so you better call and tell him."

Hiccup blinked, shaking away remnants of sleep. "Oh, uh, okay. Jim... Right, he might know what..." he scrambled to get on his feet but weakly fell back, and he saw that he didn't have his prosthetic on. "How...?"

"Sorry we didn't know how to attach it." Cristoff said, rubbing the back of his head. "Anyway, you've been gone all day. I thought maybe you'd be staying over at Astrid's until the storm passed."

Hiccup remembered what his last moments conscious, and felt cold. "I couldn't... I had something to do..." he mumbled finally pulling on his fake foot. A shallow puddle had formed that no one bothered to mop dry yet.

Hiccup stopped abruptly and turned his head. A flash of peach caught his eye.

Aster was arranging the three large bouquets of twelve roses, trying to keep them close and not cover up all the counter or table space. "It's bloody impossible! There's just too many!" he shook his head, his ponytail swishing, and placed the newest bouquet- the freshest looking- on the refrigerator. "Haaa."

"I got another one." Hiccup whispered. He rushed forward needing to see more words of love. Needing to see '\_My Hic\_' written in untidy characters.

There was no note, just flowers. Tears began to fall again as disappointment filled him for no reason.

"Anklebiter?" Aster asked with something close to panic.

"N-Nothing." Hiccup laughed weakly and wiped his eyes. "I just... it's been a rough day. Anna... s-she somehow managed to find out I was gay, she was so mad, she called me a f-fa-faggot.." he choked, covering his face. "No one... no one's ever called me that before. No one's ever look at me with hate and pain in their eyes. I feel so stupid and selfish!" Hiccup began to sob again.

Aster immediately pulled Hiccup into a hug and stroked his still-soaked auburn hair softly. "Oy, it's okay. We don't hate you, me 'n Cris. We'll always be here. We kinda figured you were gay when the flowers first came. We aren't daft, ya know?" he whispered.

Hiccup chuckled wetly.

"Aster is right. We'll be here for you, friends forfor a long time, at least." The three of them laughed. "Anna was just shocked and hurt. She really did love you." Kristoff's hand tightened briefly on Hiccup's shoulder and then loosened. "But she's young and pretty and... she'll be all right." His voice was soft with a dull pain he couldn't understand what.

"Cristoff?" Hiccup turned to face him pulling his ever handy bag of Kleenex out of his from a side table.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

His foot slipped and everything flung upside down. He hit his elbow hard and his hands skidded over the wet cement making abrasions appear on his skin. He pushed himself up with his tender hands. His knee was throbbing and his teeth hurting from gritting so hard to keep from crying out. He grabbed the items he had dropped in his fall. And began to jog again.

Petals fluttered in the puddles and were beat into the pavement by the harsh rain.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Emma sobbed brokenly, her arms wrapped around her stomach. Her whole body was shaking with cold and tears. Her legs had failed as soon as she had run up to the stoop. Her arms couldn't move.

"Jay, Jamie, why? Why couldn't you trust me? I'm so sorry!" She sobbed. Her breathing was getting harsher and she began to choke on her weeping. She looked up at door in front of her. "Dimitri! DIMITRI!" She screamed desperately between gasps of air.

Thankfully, he heard. He opened the door and looked down towards the gasping noise. He blanched. "Emma! God, what happened?"

"He broke up with me, Dimitri! He broke with me!" She launched herself into his arms and sobbed into his chest.

"Wh-what? Why?"

"He found out I was going to spend the night! He begged me to tell him the truth! He saw the kiss yesterday and thought a bunch of stupid stuff! It hurts so bad, Dimitri! I lost him! I lost him!"



There weren't even tears left, only a horrible dry gasping and wheezing.

"Calm down, calm down, Emma. Shh, I'm so sorry. I didn't mean for this to happen. I know how much he means to you."

"What am I going to do? He means everything to me! I'm so confused! He thought I didn't love him! He thought I felt sorry for him! What am I going to do?"

Emma pulled her up gently, braced her weight against his, and half-dragged, half-carried her into his home.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Jamie lay back on his bed and stared up at the ceiling. He had stripped off his clothes and toweled himself off, though he didn't dress again. He didn't feel like using his last bit of energy on clothes. He was all alone in his room, who cares if he was naked or not? Not him, and he was going to be the only one in here.

No Emma to pop up unexpectedly. No hugs and cuddles and dates at the movie theatre.

All because of some pretty-faced Russian guy who just came outta nowhere.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Astrid undressed and quickly got in to her vastly warmer pajamas. After all the cold rain and wind, her bed was like a haven waiting for her. She snuggled under the blankets with a contented sigh. She turned off her bedside lamp and turned onto her side towards the wall, a thoughtful frown on her face.

\_I wonder who that guy was and what happened to him. He seemed so sad. I've never seen a guy show so much bald emotion before. It was kind of strange. \_

And nice.

\_If I ever decided to date someone, I'd date a guy who showed all his emotions and trusted easily. Guys who bottle up everything just... just get a girl hurt.\_

She flipped onto her back and sighed closing her eyes.

\_If indeed. I don't think I'd ever try again.\_

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

The three roommates jumped high as pounding echoed through their apartment.

"It's past nine and it's storming outside, who the hell would be here now?" Cristoff wondered out loud with amazement.

"I have abso-bloody-lutely no idea." Aster answered with the same amazement in his voice.

"We could always answer the door." Hiccup suggested with a quick grin at the both of them. He wiped his eyes and hurried to the foyer as the pounding started again. Aster and Cristoff quickly followed, their amazement evolving to worry.

Hiccup pulled himself up the few inches to the peephole and peered through. He drew away quickly and gasped. The door pounded again and he flinched, startled.

"Who is it?" Before the words had completely left Cristoff's mouth, Hiccup flung open the door.

"What are you doing, you idiot! It's freezing, wet, and dark outside!"

"I needed to talk to you, now." Jack's sparkly white teeth chattered sharply.

"It could have waited until tomorrow!" Hiccup hissed angrily.

"Nope." Jack shook his head furiously sending water flying every which way. He thrust a handful of a variety of wildflowers towards him. "I couldn't get you roses 'cause the shop closes at four-thirty and I wasn't gonna get you more 'til tomorrow. But Elsa came over and told me what she said and did to you, so I grabbed these and ran over here." Jack explained in rush.

Hiccup stared down at the wildflowers. They looked rather abused and bald with about half of their petals missing. One of the flowers still had thin, scraggly roots hanging from the bottom. Hiccup took the flowers from Jack's grasp and looked up into the white-haired boy's anxious, wet face.

"Hiccup... My Hic, can we try it?"

"Tr-try what?"

"The whole gay thing, I guess." He smiled weakly. His ice blue eyes searched Hiccup's freckled face.

"YES!" Hiccup jumped forward, wrapping his arms round Jack's lean waist. "Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes! I'm so sorry! I'm so stupid!" Hiccup cried out.

Jack laughed and wrapped his arms around Hiccup's waist. He lifted him off his feet and spun him around. The flowers waved wildly in the air and stilled suddenly as Jack stopped his ecstatic spinning and brought his lips crashing down onto Hiccup's. Toothless barked excitedly, feeling his master's joy.

"That's all sorts of sweet and all, but you left the front door open and the wind's gettin' in." Aster drawled with a smirk.

Toothless tackled the two boys in all his excitement, and the door slammed shut leaving the two blissfully kissing boys on the landing outside.

Anna lay on her bed, her eyes closed tight with sleep. Her hair was sticking to her face in some places, and her eyelids were puffy and red. Beneath her face, her pillow was damp with tears.

Her phone rang shrilly. She frowned in her sleep, but remained unconscious.

\_"Hey guys, you have reached Anna's phone, but I couldn't answer, obviously! I'm sorry I missed your call, though! So, leave a message and a phone number if I don't have it already, and I'll try to call you back ASAP!"\_\*\* BEEEP.\*\*

"Hey Anna? It's Cristoff... Or Christopher if you like that. I would really like to talk to you soon. Call me whenever you can, I'll be available no matter the time." \*\*BEEEEP.\*\*

Anna frowned a bit more in her sleep as his voice entered her half-awakening mind.

\_Who was that? Who said that? He... he's the one who told me my earrings looked pretty, wasn't he?\_ A vague, tall shape with blond hair formed in her subconscious. She reached for him in her dream, walking quickly, wanting to see his face. \_Is it Haley? He seems so tall Is Haley that tall?\_

\*\*Author's Notes: MaxAngelOfDeath, I am not 100 % sure yet if it'll be Jamma to the end, but if it will be, they won't get back together soon TheQuietSongbird, try not to hate Emma. It was stupid of her, yes, not to come clean. But I guess most of the blame goes to Dimitri. \*\*

## 10. My Guardian Promises

\*\*Author's Note: Sorry for the delay, but then again, I did update simultaneously till Jack and Hiccup got together officially. Well, here's the new chapter. Once again, I cannot stress this enough, review please and make it meaningful as much as you can. Thank you.\*\*

\*\*Disclaimer: I own NOTHING\*\*

\*\*My Guardian\*\*

\*\*Chapter Ten\*\*

\*\*My Guardian Promises\*\*

Anna rose groggily blinking heavy, gritty eyes. She got to her feet, rubbing her eyes with her fists and yawning. She trudged towards her dresser, gaze bleary and still unfocused.

"I feel like crap," she muttered. She looked down and saw she was still in the clothes she wore the day before. Two cups of unfinished cocoa were congealing on her nightstand and her mirror made her scream. Two puffy, red-rimmed, and red-veined eyes met her in a face surrounded by tangled masses of brown hair, like she's been asleep during a whirlwind.

"I look like crap!" She wailed. "STUPID BOYS! STUPID SISTERS!" She

threw herself back on her bed and pummeled the mattress, screaming angrily into her pillow. For good measure, she kicked her feet rapidly on the springy bedding. In the midst of her tantrum, she missed the small, red, blinking light on her nightstand.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Hiccup yawned widely and immediately felt contentment fill him like sunshine. He smiled sleepily and looked around looking for the reason of this unaccustomed feeling within him. His emerald eyes fell upon the variety of wild flowers and his smile widened.

"I'm with Jack," The words tasted sweet on his cottoned-up tongue. He hopped out of bed and twirled like a ten-year-old girl, placed both feet on the ground, breathed a deep steadying breath, and left his room with heavier feet.

That skipped just before he entered the bathroom.

Kristoff blinked wearily from his doorway and grinned. "That's something I need to see more often. Serious young auburnettes skipping." He chuckled as he shuffled his way to the kitchen

Aster was long gone when Kristoff and Hiccup had breakfast. Then, Kristoff rose from the kitchen table.

"You're not going to have more?" Hiccup asked with surprise.

"Nah. I need to go see someone today. You want me to stay and clean up?"

"Oh, no. Go on ahead. I'll pick up when I'm done, thank you."

Kristoff nodded and quickly went to bathroom to brush his teeth. He left seconds later, which he barely noticed. A bit later, Kristoff hesitantly on the front door of the Arendelle residence. A lady with her hair bunned up answered the door, and by some luck, he got to get a word out that he was there to check on Anna. And now he was standing outside Anna's bed room door.

\_This is stupid! I'm a young adult, not a teenager! I shouldn't be here!\_ \_I should be studying for my classes or-\_ His mind was wiped blank as she answered the door.

Her brown hair was flying every which a way, glowing in the mid-morning sun. She licked her lips quickly, leaving them shining and bright. When color began to flood her cheeks and cover her nose, he felt his own blush rise. Everything about her seemed cute and adorable and young. Suddenly, he felt awkward and goofy and thirty years old.

"G-Good morning!" Her voice squeaked and her pretty, slender hands flew to her wild hair. "I look a mess. I'm so sorry."

"N-no," was all he managed to say. He shook his head quickly. "S-Sorry. Did you get my message? I left one on your answering machine."

Her blush became brighter. She was thinking about her earlier tantrum

which resulted in storming around the house snapping at everybody, mostly Elsa, even the can opener that wouldn't open her can of condensed sweet milk fast enough. It also resulted in her lack of shower-something she vaguely thought of as a rebellion against everybody. And immediately just locked herself back in her room. In other words, she was being five years old. Standing in front of her tall, older, and more mature friend, male friend, she began to feel even worse. She began to shrink lower and lower in her mind as her morning tantrum began to resurface with blaring clarity.

"N-No. I was... I was hungry, really hungry, when I woke up, so I went straight to kitchen. Then just stormed back in my room with the food, I must've missed it.." \_Gawd, now I sound fat,\_ Anna mentally groaned. She struggled for some sort of excuse. "I forgot to eat dinner."

"Oh... Right, I just wanted to come by. I wanted to make sure you were okay. I bungled it, of course. I've never been very good at this-talking to girls, I mean... or... just people in general. I mean, I can, but not very well. I never had a girlfriend before-I mean, I never said you were, I mean, not that that's a bad thing..." He continued to ramble and chastise himself.

She had stopped listening long ago.

\_I wanted to make sure you were okay.\_

"You... You know about Haley being... being gay?"

"I just found out last night for sure. I wasn't sure before, but Jack was bringing him flowers and he wouldn't tell us why," Kristoff explained quickly.

"Jack brought him flowers?" Her voice was catching, choking. It was coming, now, fast.

"Yeah, a while ago. The first one made Hale cry. I was glad I had decided to stay then," Kristoff remembered vaguely.

"They made him cry? Why?" Anna blurted out, wishing she hadn't but being unable to stop herself.

"I don't really know. He was saying something about-Hey, are you crying?" Kristoff ground to a halt, horrified.

"N-No!" Anna squeaked. She shook her head fiercely to hide the glittering drops on her eyelashes.

"I'm so stupid! I shouldn't have-I came over here to help you! I'm so stupid!" Kristoff patted at her shoulder, then stopped himself and let his hands drop awkwardly at his side. His face twisted in regret and self-distaste. He really shouldn't have come.

"N-No, I... I w-was asking qu-questions," Anna stuttered. The tears were falling faster now. "I already look horrible, now I'll look worse!" she cried out pathetically bringing the back of her hands to her eyes.

"No, no, hey, don't say that!" Kristoff reached forward and raised his arms, unsure if he should gather her in his arms or not. When the

girl unconsciously pressed her forehead to his chest, he decided to go with it.

Anna stiffened with surprise and then relaxed. \_He makes me feel so comfortable and safe. He's so much bigger than me, it's like he shielding me from the world when he holds me...\_ She wrapped her arms around his waist and sighed softly as the tears slowed and became cleansing. Kristoff rocked slowly, his large hand stroking her wild hair softly. He didn't seem to mind she hadn't showered that morning or that her hair was oily. He didn't even mind that snot had dribbled onto his shirt. He might not have noticed, however, seeing as she refused to sniffle and it could easily be tears until he actually looked.

Anna smiled as a giggle filled her throat. She pulled away, wiping her face and nose discreetly before smiling tremulously up at him.

Kristoff was blushing slightly, looking awkward and confused.

"Want to go out for some starbucks, Kristoff? I'll clean up real quick and on the way I'll ask you questions you have to answer."

"Yeah... yeah, that sounds good," he mumbled.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Elsa half-heartedly arranged the flowers so their heavy heads didn't droop over their containers and break their stems. After everything that's been going on, she decided to give Aster's belief a chance and had her mom bring flowers in to decorate the shop. The Lily of the Valleys swayed lightly as she passed her fingers over them. Through the store she walked slowly, yet efficiently, readying the flowers for their debut. Aster had been right, they did have a calming effect. School would be starting soon. Something she almost dreaded. No Jack, Anna was still giving her the cold shoulder. When she left with Kristoff earlier, the blond boy acknowledged her while Anna pointedly ignored her. Elsa sighs, who would she laugh with, eat with, hang with, or even do homework with? One selfish mistake, just one, after a lifetime of responsibilities and trying to make everyone happy, and she lost everything.

She frowned angrily. Then, with a guilty sigh, she calmed herself and dragged the aching sadness back. Though stupid, silly, girly tears sprung from the emotion she revived, it was better than blaming everyone else for her mistakes. Mistakessss, more than one. Those simple, small mistakes began a big major mistake that screwed with more than one heart, not including her own.

"You' ain't dancin' today, Snow Princess?" asked a muffled voice from outside the window.

Elsa jumped high in the air, squeaked embarrassingly loud, and spun around. "D-don't do that!" she gasped.

Aster laughed. "Can I come inside?"

"No." She turned away to the begonias on the other side of the store. He rapped loudly on the glass, which she promptly ignored. She

gritted her teeth as that infernal tapping continued on and on. She glanced up at the clock. \_Five minutes!\_

She turned to the window and saw him smirking and tapping away. She rubbed her temples before straightening her shoulders and stalking towards the door. She flipped around the '\_closed\_' sign to '\_open\_' and pulled open the door.

"I'm only opening the door because we're about to open anyway," Elsa ground out angrily.

"I thought I was charming and persistent."

"Those two words should never be used together," Elsa retorted shortly. She hurried to place the counter between herself and the handsome ponytailed celebrity whom sauntered coolly into the shop, hands shoved in his pockets.

"All right, next time I'll just be persistent." Aster grinned as her mouth twitched involuntarily.

"Please leave. I... I'm not in the mood to flirt or make nice-nice."

"I'm not here to flirt," Aster demurred, raising a fair eyebrow and leaning on the counter. "I'm here for a job."

"What?"

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Jack walked through the sun-filled avenue. A few other early risers-many he had never seen before in his life-walked or jogged past.

\_Crazy people, jogging at nine in the morning, damn.\_

He conveniently forgot he was awake at nine in the morning and walking towards his new boyfriend's flat with an amazingly light stride. He hadn't been able to wait until the afternoon to see Hiccup, and so had decided to wake up the rest of the way after his early morning piss and eat breakfast at Hiccup's.

"His food will be better than mom's anyway," he decided aloud, frowning why bad cooking had to run in his mom's side of the family.

A familiar sign caught his eye and he turned, slowing down his quick pace. It was the convenience store he had kissed Hiccup in days ago. On impulse, he stepped inside. The bell jangled pleasantly over his head. He looked around expectantly, but no quirky, feisty blond was in sight. He frowned slightly and decided to look around as no cashier at all was at the counter.

"Maybe I should get a bun or something to tide me over 'til I get to Hic's?" he wondered to himself as he traveled through the small store. Hiccup's house was maybe five minutes from the store. There was no way he could walk there without something to tide him over. His stomach was already beginning to rumble, threatening to eat itself. As he walked past the cooler section, his eyes fell on rows

of free sample cookies. A certain batch of cookies, dark brown in color with frosting, drew his hand forward, missing the free samples and going directly to choose a pack.

A package of cookies was soon in his hand.

\_"\*\*"I've never had chocolate or candy."\*\*\_ \_\*\*"I've never had a friend before and I've never had chocolate. And now I have both. A kiss seems like the right thing to do."\*\*\_

Jack chuckled and, once again trusting his instincts, he went to the register to buy his find, adding a pack of cream puffs when he saw some as an afterthought. A roundish guy with a blond beard, a prosthetic hand and foot, was chewing gum and flipping through a newspaper, was at the register.

"Good mornin'. Do you know Astrid?"

"She's my daughter," the man popped his gum bubble and rang up the pack cookies and cream puffs. "Have a nice day, lad."

"Right. You, too," Jack gave a half-hearted wave and left quickly.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

"You can't just decide to work here!" Elsa squawked.

"Why not? I need a job that won't conflict with band practice or school. You aren't open very long and it's nearby. It's perfect. I only have two classes a day this semester and I'm sure I'll be able to wrangle a shift in between them. Whaddya say? A longer break for you and an opportunity for more business. You and your mum are the only workers, you know. You should hire some help to watch the counter while you sew or sumthin'. Like me." He smirked at her as she began to take him seriously despite herself.

"What do you mean more business?" she finally asked suspiciously, eyes narrowed.

"Well, tailor and dress shops only get so much money nowadays. With me, however, a bunch o' crazy, rabid, fan girls will be in here every day to buy 'em dresses and outfits and stare at me," Aster explained looking at his fingernails with avid interest, his smirk still hovering on his lips.

"Big head much?" Elsa snapped, fighting her own answering smile.

"Of course not, just realistic."

"Realistic would be realizing crazy, rabid, fan girls would tear this place apart, and maybe not even buy outfits. You don't need to be at the counter to stare," Elsa retorted.

"I'll work on that, no worries. I'm charming, remember?"

"And persistent, a trait I dislike." She glanced hard at him. "Immensely."

Then, a woman bursted in. "Elsa! What are you talking about? This



young man is right!" Her mother interrupted, walking the rest of the way into the shop. "He's right about every point, including the longer breaks part. I would love the help myself. I feel so much more tired these days and you'll be starting your third year in high school this year," Mrs. Arendelle reminded her as Aster checks himself making sure he looked okay.

"Motheeeeerrrr!" Elsa whined. "You can't be serious!"

"Hush. Ladies don't talk like that." Elsa scowled darkly, but her mother continued on undeterred, addressing Aster directly. "What's your name, young man?"

"E. Aster Bunnymund." He bowed quickly and smiled charmingly up at her.

"Nice to meet you. Why don't we step into my parlor and discuss your hours and wages." She led him towards the door leading into the house. "Stop scowling, dear, you'll get wrinkles."

As the door closed, Elsa sighed in defeat and began to sort out the clothes, placing the outfits that were misplaced when customers checked on them to their designated areas. "Stupid handsome boys with ponytails and spring green eyes," she muttered darkly.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Hiccup continued eating his breakfast of rice porridge and fried eggs. He had his palm pilot open, arranging his class schedule and seminars as he ate until a knock sounded at the door. He rose, mildly thinking Kristoff had forgotten his keys and locked himself out. His mind was still weighing the benefits of joining the Library and Book-talk Club versus the Fund Raising Association as he opened the door. He blinked, struck dumb when he saw Jack sanding there, grinning.

"Jackson!" Hiccup gasped.

"What did I do?" Jack asked wildly.

"Nothing. Why?" Hiccup replied automatically, stepping back to let Jack in. "I was just startled."

"You called me Jackson. People only call me that when they're angry." He kissed Hiccup quickly, relishing the fact he could do that whenever he wanted. "You still taste like cookies with frostings." Jack moved into the apartment and Hiccup closed the door behind him, his freckled cheeks rather red.

"I do not! I haven't had any in years!" Hiccup protested as Jack kicked off his shoes and followed him into the kitchen.

"You always taste like it, I guess. Which reminds me, here."

Hiccup turned to take what was offered. He halted in the middle of the hall, staring down at the package. His green eyes lit up like Christmas lights, a wide smile curving up his lips. "Chocolate cookies... with frostings?" Hiccup asked, looking up at Jack's grin and feeling his own shy smile grow in response.

"I promised, didn't I? I can only hope they have that snowflake pattern. I couldn't tell unless I tear it open but of course I couldn't do that. Although I figured I'd buy these for you today anyway. They're the only thing I could think of to top that dragon, ya know? So, I passed the store today and though, heck, why not? I added some strawberry creampuffs too."

"I believe I comprehend," Hiccup said, teasing his blundering sweetheart mildly. "You're really strange, Jackson." He continued on to the kitchen, still smiling.

"Why do you keep calling me that?" Jack whined as he pulled himself out a chair when they got to the kitchen table. He reached for the extras Hiccup had cooked as said auburnette placed the pastries in the fridge. "Did you cook this?" he asked after a quick swallow.

"Yes." Hiccup sat down at his seat and pulled his bowl forward once more. "Didn't you eat at home?"

"No way. Remember my mom's idea of cooking? Apparently, it runs in her side of the family. Nasty stuff. Especially since it's been getting healthier which means more complicated and weird and more burnt. Why can't she just fry an egg for breakfast and whip up rice porridge? It's awesome!" Jack said, indicating Hiccup's meal.

"Nonsense, it's egg and porridge." Hiccup flushed.

Jack grinned. "It's much better than spinach-wrapped tofurkey."

"That doesn't sound inedible," Hiccup murmured, frowning. "maybe you just don't appreciate healthy food like you should."

"Yeah, well, then try eating it when not only do you burn the spinach and tofurkey, but you also burnt the corn gruel you're supposed to dip it in and then blend three different veggies and three different fruits, a touch of beef jerky, and say it's a breakfast shake," Jack retorted as he helped himself to last egg. Hiccup blanched. Jack slurped down some porridge and nodded at Hiccup. "Exactly. Too much of a good thing with lotsa burnt added." He finished the breakfast in record time. With a mischievous twinkle in his eyes, he rose from his chair and stood behind Hiccup's chair. He draped his arms around his tiny boyfriend's shoulder and leaned his cheek against the soft hair and ear.

"Wh-what are you doing?"

"Cuddling. I haven't done this before."

"Neither have I," Hiccup whispered. He blushed and leaned back. His small hand grasped Jack's wrist lightly. "Good morning, Jackson."

"G'mornin, my Hic." He kissed the side of Hiccup's bright red face. "Why are you calling me that?"

"I don't know." Hiccup pulled away to the side a bit to meet Jack's winter eyes. "I... I like it. I... I wish I had a name for you that I

could use exclusively, something special for me. Silly, isn't it?"

Jack thought about it. "Nah. I don't want anybody else to call you Hiccup. It's my name that I gave you. I feel all sorts of possessive about you, ya know?" he grinned.

Hiccup smiled back. "I believe you do because of the challenges we already had to face. It was hard to be together. We had to fight for it. Those sort of trials result in a deeper relationship and, maybe, one that endures longer,"

"Uhh okay...? Man, don't make it all scientificcy." Jack laughed. "As for that personal name, make it snowflake or something. So, you done with breakfast?"

Hiccup looked down at his half-finished meal, then back at Jack's hopeful face. He bit back a mental sigh and chuckle. "Yes." He began to set down his spoon to make room for Jack to eat when suddenly his seat was being pulled backwards and his butt was leaving the wooden chair. His feet were flung up into the air and he quickly wrapped his arms around Jack's neck. "What are you doing?"

"We're going to go cuddle, for reals," Jack announced simply.

"What?" Hiccup squirmed trying to at least look at Jack's face, but it was impossible.

"I want to cuddle now. I like it and I want to do it some more while I'm sitting down. We'll be more comfortable."

"You can wait until the dishes are put up then!" Hiccup snapped, cursing once more his petite build. Any other freshman college student wouldn't be manhandled towards his own couch by his high school boyfriend.

"Nope!" Jack began to walk towards the living room.

"Put me down, Jackson!"

Jack just grinned. \_Well, he's actually mad this time...\_

And that's when something large, black, and canine came to Hiccup's rescue.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

"Did you really have to start today?"

"Today's perfect for a trial period and training." Aster shrugged. "Tomorrow I'm going to open with you."

Elsa glared at Aster. This time, she didn't have to pretend anger. "Are you trying to ruin my life? That's my time."

"Oh... I'm really sorry then. I need to learn how to open, though, and your mom doesn't open when you're not in school."

"I know that," Elsa sighed as she moved around the counter. "Please,

don't do that, you'll hurt the flower," she told a group of teenagers fiddling with an already arranged bouquet of flowers.

"We'll hurt them? We're just looking!" sneered a girl just about Elsa's age.

Aster interrupted. "Excuse me, you're pulling on the petals, miss. Don't touch, decors only or not, they're not exactly cheap."

"Oh, sorry," The girl blushed heatedly, and she and her friends started giggling. "But we just thought... Since... There's no sign-

"No, but you obviously don't know how to handle them," Elsa snapped angrily, upset why they were treated differently.

"I don't think I'm going to buy anything with an attitude like yours in my face."

"Good, get out, Taffyta." Elsa sighed. The group of girls gaped. "What, didn't you hear me? Get. Out. Are you deaf and stupid? You weren't going to buy anything anyway. You were just here to flirt with Jack in case he showed up. He isn't going to so Get. Out." she glared at them.

The girls scurried out, frightened and acting like they weren't.

"Crikey, cold much, Snow Princess?"

"Don't call me that!"

"Why? You embarrassed that I caught you acting all cute?"

"No!" Elsa accidentally shouted. She took a steadying breath. "My father is the only guy who can call me that."

"Your father?"

"It's an endearment."

"That's sweet." Aster smiled, going off to the flowers that the group of teenagers disturbed earlier. "Hello, beauties, you're so popular today, aren't you?" he cooed. "Hey, you know, it might be good for the business if you matched flower corsage with the prom gowns with a proper meaning to it."

Elsa thought about it. "Not a bad idea. So, do you know what every flowers means?" she asked.

"Not all of them by heart, but there's a book at my pack."

Elsa pulled out a book from Aster's backpack, wondering if he always carried it, and looked up hibiscuses since the page was bookmarked. "Consumed by love or delicate beauty."

"Hmmm... when's your birthday?"

"Oh, shut up!" Elsa laughed suddenly.

Aster chuckled. "Not every book says the same thing, though. Take asters, the flower my mum named me after as a request. My grandmother told me asters meant contentment and she planted them in her garden for her sixtieth anniversary with my grandfather. But in there, it means... here, look it up." He came back and leaned over the counter and started flipping pages with Elsa. "Symbol of love, daintiness."

"It also means... The Chinese symbol of womanhood," Elsa said, reading off the passage, the she smirked at Aster.

He rolled his eyes. "Oy, it ain't funny."

"Are you Chinese?"

"No!"

Elsa laughed again. Then, she blushed when she realized how close they were. Their noses were just inches apart, though the counter was in between them. His eyes were so green, so soft as he smiled at her. Not smirking, truly smiling at her. Her heart pounded in her ears as their gazes remained locked. Elsa quickly lowered herself back down to the ground, tearing her gaze away, and backing up. "Uh, I better check on my mom."

"All right." The phone rang just as Aster began to walk around the counter to follow. He grimaced and turned back from the phone as Elsa was leaving. "Oy, Elsa?"

"Yes?"

"I promise I'll stick around."

Her back stiffened. "Th-thank you" she whispered.

He answered the phone. She hummed quietly and smiled brightly. Behind her on the phone, Aster was hissing quickly and lowly with a very, very ticked off look on his face. It lost some of its usual effect, however, because of the big pink apron Elsa had forced him to wear as his only uniform.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Jack and Hiccup walked up the streets, hands clutching each other tightly. Their first test done. They had walked across town holding hands and no one had pointed, jeered, or called out rude names. They smiled with relief at each other. They reached the convenience store, the man, Gobber, directing them up some stairs, telling them the directions to his daughter's room. Hiccup then knocked on the door with his free hand.

"HALEEEY!" shouted an over-exuberant voice. The two boys winced as the door flew open. "I was right. It is Haley... and with Jack, too, good boy." Astrid smiled.

"Uh huh," Jack said finally after staring at her frightfully-joyful face.

"Astri-"

"Jack is here?" Emma suddenly appeared behind Astrid and smiled brightly. "Finally!"

The two boys glanced at each other filled with confusion.

"What's going on?" Jack bluntly asked.

The two girls' smiles became strangely frozen.

"NOTHING!"

"Uhhuh"

"Come on in, dorks." Astrid crowed grabbing their entwined fingers.

The two boys barely managed to not trip over as she forcibly dragged them into her bedroom. They briefly took in the pale yellow walls, posters of miscellenous themes, and a large pile of stuffed animals before they saw the other two guests. A tallish, slender brownish red haired boy and a shorter, bruntte with a thin ponytail and brown-eyed, even younger boy were sitting on the floor.

"Jim, Dimitri, it's good to see you two again," Hiccup greeted them politely.

They both smiled back. "Nice to see you doing all right, Haley." Jim said.

"Do you know these guys, too, Dimitri?" Jack asked hopping onto the bed covered in wolves howling with frosty breath.

"No, Emma spent the night over at my house and asked Astrid if I could come over to the party as well," Dimitri answered with an easy shrug.

"I didn't mean to be a bother, but I felt rude just leaving Dimitri alone. His mom went out of town yesterday and I promised to hang out with him until she came back tonight," Emma quickly put in as the two older boy's confused expression.

Jack and Hiccup raised their eyebrows.

"Sleep over?" Jack didn't think he liked hearing Emma sleeping over a guy's place. "What about Jamie?" He asked tactlessly.

Her beautiful eyes began to shine. Her lips again formed that fake smile.

"Oh? Bennette? We broke up last night. A silly misunder-understanding. We-we... we were qu-qu-quite differ... different... to... begin... with." Her last words came out in a tumble. "Sorry," she gasped out. She got to her feet and left the room at a forced-sedate pace.

"I don't think she wanted that to happen," Jack quietly murmured to Hiccup. The younger boy nodded slowly, frowning. He wondered if he should get up, but at Jack's frown, realized he probably shouldn't get involved.

"So, how did you two get together at last?" Astrid quickly

blurted.

Someone interrupted. "Okay... So just to confirm here... Haley, you are homosexual?" Dimitri asked, looking from Hiccup to Jack.

Hiccup frowned. "That sounds strange. That's the first time someone just bluntly asked me that. I'm homosexual and I'm dating Jack, however."

"Yeah, it does sound weird, doesn't it?" Jack released Hiccup's hand and wrapped his arm around his shoulders instead. "It's okay, though. I guess that's how it works. That line, um, what was it, '\_I'm dating Jack\_', yeah, that sounded pretty awesome."

Hiccup blushed. Astrid giggled, genuinely pleased. Dimitri chuckled as well. Emma slipped back into the room. Her eyes looked a lot less shiny and a little red, but not much.

"I'm going to get the cake." Jim said, standing up. "My mother made it so we won't have to settle for the usual store bought cakes."

Dimitri stood with him. "Should I help you, Jimbo?" Dimitri offered, raising his brows suggestively.

Jim blushed vividly. "W-whatever, this way. I left it downstairs at the kitchen fridge so Astrid couldn't wrestle it out of my arms."

"Hey! My place, I get it when I want to!" Astrid defended.

The two boys left, the taller one laughing. Hiccup turned from the two boys leaving just in time to see the two girls exchange glances and quickly look away. He frowned softly in thought, but decided it wasn't his business.

"Astrid how long have you known Jim?" Jack asked, by their banter and Jim freely using the family fridge, it was plain that they were close.

"Well, we grew up together." Her eyes were suddenly hooded, making her smile completely useless. "I was the one who encouraged him to come out from the closet," she noticed them staring. "Oh, he's NOW openly bi. Er, except he hasn't come out to his mom yet, I don't rush him to come clean since it doesn't matter unless he has a boyfriend... which he doesn't yet."

"Okay..." Jack looked at his sister. "So, why are you acting so weird?"

"I'm not acting weird, Jack. You're so silly!"

"Uh huh"

"All right! Bring out the presents!" Astrid quickly attacked, turning the tables neatly, pulling a small gift-wrapped box from under her pillow, tossing it to Hiccup. "Happy birthday, freckles."

Jack blinked, looking at the wide-eyed Hiccup. "It's your birthday today?!" He blurted. "you said it was in Autumn!" he accused.

"I-I did! It is! Astrid?"

Astrid shrugged. "We'd be back to school by then, just thought we had a headstart on celebrating since we can't be sure if we'll be too busy to get around to it, we're probably not as desperate as Jack who'll probably try hogging you to himself. So, surprise."

Jack sighed, relieved. "Okay, glad I'm not the last one to know of my own boyfriend's birthday."

"Right, I guess that's not a bad idea." Hiccup begun unwrapping it, revealing a small sketch pad. "Thanks Astrid."

Emma gave her own. "It's just color pencils though."

"Happy sort-of birthday to you! Happy sort-of birthday to you!" came Dimitri's and Jim's voices from the hallway. The other three quickly joined in as the two boys walked through the door, Jim carrying the yellow-frosted cake.

Hiccup laughed and Dimitri quickly passed around paper plates and plastic forks. Astrid ran out the door and reappeared quickly with ice-cream. Soon, they were laughing and teasing each other, truly enjoying themselves. Dimitri and Jim were sitting next to one another, maybe a little closer than normal.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Emma walked into their family apartment. She looked down and her eyebrows lowered when she noticed a pair of shoes she'd never seen before. Nice brown loafers about the same size as her own, but undoubtedly masculine.

"Emma, is that you?"

"Yes, Mom!"

"There's someone here to meet you, Emma."

"Oh?" Emma quickly went into the kitchen where her mother's voice was coming from. She stopped abruptly when she entered and let her overnight bag slide down her arm. A tall, muscle-toned teenager was sitting at the kitchen table with her mother. He turned towards her, eyebrows rising, his lips curving upwards into a smile in his face. Emma inwardly shook herself and stepped into the kitchen, trying not to gape.

"Hey, my name is Eret, technically Eret Junior cause my dad is named Eret too. But anyway," He shrugged, swiftly rising from his seat.

"He's going to be your new student. He hasn't been keeping up with his studies lately, and he said you handed out flyers for tutoring service ways back."

"Oh, um, good afternoon. I'm Emma. I'm sorry if I kept you both waiting. I was at a friend's house," Emma mumbled as she took her hair behind her ear.



"It was no problem, Emma." he told her.

Emma felt something in her grow warm.

She grasped his cool hand firmly. "I need to put some stuff in my room. Why don't we get to know each other while I get situated?"

"Sounds all right."

They released their hands and she led him towards her room. She paused and looked over her shoulder. "Oh, Mom?"

"Yes, dear?"

"Jack is going over to Hiccup's again. I think he's going to have dinner over there, too."

"If I didn't know any better, I'd swear he's been trying to avoid eating here" Thiana muttered to herself. "Oh well, at least he won't be moping around and watching romances all day long anymore."

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Eret followed Emma to her bedroom. He had never been a girl's room, and he just met this one.

Emma Overland. She had been top three percent for a number of years and suddenly, two years ago, she began to slack off. Still on the top ten, but dropping to sixth place. Still, she was above average, of course, but strange when compared to her easy top three percent. When he hesitantly asked the mother, he learned that was the year she started dating a young man named Jamie Bennette, who also needed her help in tutoring.

Eret glanced at her out of the corner of his eye and found that story hard to believe. She was very pretty, long-brown hair that framed a pretty face with nice eyes and long eyelashes. Her mouth was small and slightly too firm to look as though she smiled easily, but well-shaped and dusky pink. Overall, her appearance was pleasing and calming. Her records showed her to be fairly intelligent and her manners were perfect. She seemed straightforward, not too shy or too blunt, and practical.

"I wanted to ask you a somewhat personal question. I think it's necessary I know, cause, y'know, as I'm to be your student," Eret finally forced himself to say. \_Exactly, I'm not being nosy.\_

"Oh? Um, I don't see why not, then," Emma smiled at him as she threw clothes from her bag to a laundry hamper and tossed a plastic bag with bathroom things on her bed.

"So, I know about your school records. I was wondering what happened two years ago when you dropped from top three percent."

"Oh.." Her eyes glanced down at the now-empty pack in her hands. "This will sound stupid, but it happened because of a boy." Her smile widened, but seemed all the more sad.

"Uh, Jamie Bennette?"

Her eyes flew up to meet his and her small mouth formed an '\_o\_' of surprise. "You know him?" Her voice was excited and somewhat pained.

"Gossips. I thought it could be a false story or made up assumptions, actually. You didn't seem the person to let your studies slide for a boy." He frowned suddenly. "His name does sound familiar, though."

"I'm sorry to disappoint you, but I did let my studies slide for a boy."

Eret blinked when he recognized the stiff tone of voice. "I didn't mean to offend you. I'm just confused."

Emma put her backpack on a hanger and hung it up in her closet. She slid it closed and then motioned for him to sit at her desk. As he did so, she hopped onto her nearby bed, next to the bag she'd thrown there.

"I knew Jamie since kindergarten," she explained shortly. "When we started dating, I wanted to help him. He's very smart... just lacks focus, I'm sure you've met people like that? He makes it up for being imaginative and creative. He could probably write a novel. Jamie could absorb anything that interested him, but couldn't sit still long enough to learn the stuff that he didn't." Her eyes were fond and warm. Her whole face lit up as she talked about him, her lips tugging upwards. "I... I loved him very much. I didn't mind letting my studies slide. It was nice having someone need me, someone to teach and help."

"What happened? Aren't you still dating?" he asked, concerned seeing tears build in her eyes.

"N-No. He broke up with me yesterday. I was so stupid!" She sniffled and her eyes looked around trying to find her box of Kleenex.

Eret found it first and handed it to her. "Why don't you tell me?"

"I can't! You see, it all started with a secret I couldn't tell him!"

"I have no one to tell secrets to. I don't have any friends and I don't know anyone you know. I promise, no matter what, whatever you tell me, no one else will ever hear. Besides, it seems like something you should vent out."

Emma bit her lip, glanced hard at him, and then nodded. Eret listened silently as her story unfolded.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

The two boys were cuddling at the couch, Toothless napping on Hiccup's bed so he didn't bother them. Suddenly, Hiccup and Jack jumped as the door slammed loudly just past five.

"Aster?" Hiccup called out half-rising from the couch.

"Aye?" Aster voice all but snarled back.

The couple on the couch glanced at each other. "Has something happened?" Hiccup tentatively replied.

Aster entered the living room. His green eyes were dark with fury and his lips were pulled so tightly they looked like a line drawn across his face.

"Whoa, what happened, dude?" Jack choked out, drawing away from the sheer rage emanating from him.

"A key member ditched us! He's also one of our best choreographers, not just some random dancer! We bloody have a concert in two weeks! It's our, like, new school year kinda thing! It's one of our biggest ones. All the kids start racing to get tickets because the first coupla weeks back to school after summer vacation always suck and they like partyin', ya know?" Aster growled, running his hand through his already messed up hair, ponytail falling apart and slumping against the couch behind them.

"Why did the person leave? What's the reason?" Jack asked, beginning to understand and sympathize. What would it be like if one of his most vital team members just ditched two weeks before a big meet? He'd be spitting fire, too!

"Just his stupid girlfriend! '\_I don't want you to be in that band anymore, Zuko. You don't spend every blinking moment with me and I can't deal. Pleeaaaaase, pretty please, or I'll murder you please, just quit for me?\_' Blithering, monkey-toed, double-crossing..."

"I'm very sorry, Aster. How about some coffee?" Hiccup offered hastily, getting up, making Jack pout because they had been snuggled up pretty close just moments ago.

"Whatever, aye. Thanks." Aster fell onto to the couch, in Hiccup's empty spot, with ragged sigh. "How am I goin' to find a new dancer who has basic knowledge on hand-combat moves and teach him our steps and songs before the concert?"

"It's not combat moves, but I learned parkour stuff back then," Jack said nonchalantly. He was too busy wondering if he could convince Hiccup to pick up where they left off in the relative safety of his bedroom. "it's more like cool maneuvering techniques."

Aster felt his muscles burn and almost tear in his neck as he turned his head quickly. "What?"

"I taught myself a few years back when I was bored, wathced some videos. Parkour rolls, flips, vaults, wall run climb. Basically, some say it's a bit like free running, only with wicked moves and it's not just for running. But I just couldn't teach myself anymore. It got really hard, ya know?" Jack leaned back, wondering how he'd get Hiccup to agree when it was already this late in the evening. He was, once again, rudely interrupted by Aster when his arm was pulled almost out of its socket and his butt left the couch. "WHAT ARE YOU DOING, DUDE?"

"You. Are. Learning. Songs. And. Teaching. Steps. Now." Aster dragged

Jack, loudly protesting, towards the bedrooms. To the wrong bedroom.

As they passed the kitchen opening, Hiccup walked out with a tray of butter biscuits. He blinked and his gaze followed his angrily howling boyfriend down the hallway.

"I thought you wanted coffee?" Hiccup called.

"I need a dance mat more and a stereo! Your idiot boyfriend told me he knew some moves."

"IT'S PARKOUR! JUST A LITTLE BIT! IT'S NOT EVEN REALLY FOR COMBAT! COME ON! I WAS ENJOYING MYSELF BEFORE YOU SHOWED UP!"

"NO MORE PLAY! IT'S TIME TO WORK, YOU DAMN BLOKE!"

"HEY!"

"I guess I'd better start dinner then, instead," Hiccup decided. He grabbed the phone on his way back to the kitchen and dialed Kristoff's cell number. He'd better let him know in case he wanted to head home in time for it to be done, instead of having leftovers.

**\*\*Author's Note:** Okay, things to clarify, Emma and Astrid knows each other from school, somehow acquaintances. No, Emma doesn't know Astrid picked Jamie off the streets and Astrid doesn't know Emma is Jamie's girlfriend... Or ex-, in this case. Uhhh I haven't watched HTTYD2 enough times yet to fully get Eret's persona. Politeness can be excused now as well as other OOC factors. So, uh, if you guys can give me the general persona of the guy, that could mean quicker updates. I don't want Eret to be OOC for long, so unless I know how to work with the guy, updates might lag.\*\*

**\*\*REVIEW PLEASE REVIEW PLEASE REVIEW PLEASE. MEANINGFUL MEANINGFUL MEANINGFUL (Honestly, it's not that hard)\*\***

## 11. My Guardian School

**\*\*Author's Notes:** Getting this out early for Lord Zerthin, me amigo :D. So Enjoy. \*\*

**\*\*Disclaimer:** I own nothing\*\*

**\*\*My Guardian\*\***

**\*\*Chapter Eleven\*\***

**\*\*My Guardian School\*\***

Jack grumbled angrily under his breath.

"Jackson, stop it. You know you have only a few days left. You should be more worried that everything will be out of stock," Thiana scolded.

"I hope it is," Jack retorted lowly.

Thiana looked down at the list in her hand. "There sure are a lot of books. Your team uniform needing adjustments too is going to make a huge hole in my wallet, why do you grow so easily? Emma's books are going to be expensive, too," She sighed sadly. She really didn't want to go secondhand with school things like she did with clothes and other household items.

"You can use my allowance," Jack offered pulling out his wallet.

"What? No, I couldn't possibly!" Thiana blushed and glanced around quickly to see if anyone had heard.

"I have a bit of cash coming soon," Jack shrugged nonchalantly.

"Since when did you get a job?"

"It's not a jobkind of a paying club. I'm the new member of the Easter Manuevers, thanks to Aster," Jack told her shoving the money into her hands.

"I had no idea" Thiana stuttered.

"It wasn't by choice," Jack muttered darkly.

"What about school lunches, then? Are you going to have cash by then?" Thiana asked, still hesitant, the bills in her outstretched hand.

"Ah." Jack blushed and looked down at his shoes. "Hiccup said he'd make me lunch ..."

"Ooohhh, how darling! You're all grown up and in love!" Thiana squealed throwing her arms around him. "You're growing up so well!"

"Mom," Jack whined pulling away a little.

"We better hurry up and finish school shopping. I still have to buy groceries since your dad and I want to invite Hiccup over for dinner this weekend," Thiana said happily, shoving the bills in her wallet. With this, she would have enough for the books and Jack's uniform repairsments.

"R-Really?" Jack's eyes widened.

"Yes. I mean, we have to get to know this boy who you're giving your heart to, now don't we?" She linked her arm through his and pulled him forward. Jack pushed the cart.

\_How cool! It'll be like Hic's is really accepted by my family! It's one thing to just say it and another to actually look at it.\_ Jack felt a whole lot better about shopping now.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Anna led Cristoff through the mall chatting gaily. Cristoff had protested at first, but Anna learned that looking up at him through her lashes and pouting her lips just a little bit did wonders for her

older friend.

\_I wonder if he's going to ask me out? He probably won't because he's a little too old for me and he's so shy. But I think... I think I would say yes. Going out with Haley was different... not just because of him. I was always watching what I said, making sure I looked just perfect, and trying to be a completely different person almost! I couldn't even flirt with him very well. I kept thinking he was judging me and I was coming up lacking. Which is completely stupid, one: because he's not like that at all. Two: he's dating JACK.\_

Cristoff looked down at her as she giggled quietly. "What are you thinking?"

"I just realized what a goober I've been." She covered her mouth with her fist and laughed harder. "I've been so silly! I was in love with Haley, but it wasn't a very mature love, I guess. It was puppy love." She smiled up at Cristoff brightly. "He was so different from anybody I'd ever met, anybody I'd ever liked, I thought that difference was something more than it was." Her eyes became sad. "I hope he'll accept my apology in the future so we can be friends again. I have the feeling that if I hadn't been so blind to begin with we would've been very good friends."

"He always said he really liked you. It's one of the reasons he ended his relationship with Jack before it even started," Cristoff told her, patting her head awkwardly.

"What do you mean?"

"He told me just the other day what had been going on since he moved here from Berk. You won't be sad if I tell you, will you?" he asked, his expression wary.

"No, I'm fine. Tell me," Anna replied shaking her head fiercely.

They continued shopping while he told her what he had been told.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Jamie lay back on the twin-sized bed. He twisted his head and gazed down at the comforter blankly. While he waited, he traced the bold lines that made up the wolf howling with steaming breath. He turned his head as the door opened.

Astrid walked in with tray of cookies and two big glasses of some weird substance. "I made them this morning!" she announced proudly.

"Uh... what's in the glass?"

"It's yak nog! Dad taught me."

Jamie eyed the drink speculatively. "Are you sure they're not poisoned?"

"HEY!" Astrid eyebrow twitched and her mouth curled into a snarl. "maybe you rather have a punch in the face?"

"Okay, okay! I'll have them!" Jamie held his hands up in defense. "I was just joking, sheesh!" he took the glass and drank from it, his eyes widening and he gagged.

Luckily, Astrid had her back turned as she placed the tray. "So, school's back in a few days, you know."

"Mh-hm!" Jamie was looking around frantically, he found the open window just beside the bed and leaned towards it.

"Do you have all the books?"

Jamie stuffed his mouth with the cookies to get the flavor out and ignored the question completely. "YUM! I love snickerdoodles!" he took another huge bite, grinning up at her, albeit awkwardly.

"Really?" Astrid grinned in delight. "I'm glad! I like them, too. They're actually the only cookie I know how to bake," she confessed.

"Oh, well, cool, as least you know how to, right?" Jamie shrugged and took another, shoveling it down. "The best I can make is coffee, but since I don't really like the taste, I just make my parents it every morning. lame, huh?"

"No, it's sweet." Astrid smiled at him. "So, um, if you don't mind me asking... why were you sitting out in the rain?"

Jamie glanced at her mutinously. "Just 'cuz I'm eating your cookies doesn't mean I havta tell ya."

"No, but... I would like to know" Astrid persisted gently, barely managing not to take him by the shoulders and shake the story out of him.

"It's gonna sound stupid"

"It's all right, I promise to try not to laugh."

He glared at her, but decided to tell her anyway. If he was honest with himself, he really wanted someone to sympathize. He wanted someone to tell him he was right.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

"The day you've been dreading, aye?" Aster's smooth voice drawled.

Elsa flashed him a quick smile as she walked to the door. "I'm sure I'll be fine." At least Anna started talking to her and smiling at her again. She only left early because Cristoff came to walk her to school. Elsa wanted to stay and help out on the store a bit, though, even when her mom told her she could just go.

"Your mom said she would finish opening the store if I felt like walking you to school," Aster commented still flipping through the list of Corsage orders. Elsa's mom loved his idea.

"Thanks," Elsa muttered with a faint blush, "but I'm fine. Really."

"Thought that's what you'd say." Aster grinned as he looked towards her. "Since you're such a trooper, I thought about a Plan B."

"What?"

Aster edged around the counter and pulled a small slip of paper out of his pocket. He presented it to her with a flourish. "A backstage ticket to the upcoming show of the Easter Manuevers."

"N-No way!" Elsa squeaked grasping the ticket and staring at it. "You'd... You'd really give this to me? Why?"

"Because... you won't let me help you." Aster's fingers brushed through stray silver blond locks and lightly skimmed her forehead. "I want to do something for you."

"Th-Thank you." Her lips trembled just a little. She quickly pulled away and spun around to collect herself. "I thought you lost your a member, you were already few to begin with, how are you gonna make do with only three members? It lacks stage prescen... And wasn't the one who quit a choreographer too?" Her voice was a little low and hoarse, but otherwise fine.

"He's been replaced, no worries. We got lucky. Don't you have high school to get to?"

"Yes, um have a good day, Aster," Elsa mumbled backing towards the door and tucking her hair behind her ear nervously.

"You too, beauty."

Elsa barely contained her smile before turning and pushing out the door. She barely managed to keep from skipping down the sidewalk. Behind her, Aster watched her walking away, smirking a little.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

"It's really weird."

"It is not that weird, Jack."

"No, so weird, really weird, like, bazooka weird."

"Bazooka weird...? Are you sure you've grown up in the decade I've not been here?"

"Hiccup! It's so weird. You have to agree that there's definitely weirdness," Jack whined. Hiccup sighed in defeat. Emma watched with amusement.

"It is a little strange, I'll admit. I don't believe it is... bazooka weird, however."

Emma giggled quietly behind her hand.

"Aw, shaddup, Ems. I'm sure you can't wait to get to your turnoff so



you can wet your pants laughing at me," Jack snapped at her, making her laugh only harder.

"I don't think the situation itself is funny, just the way you're reacting."

"Oi! C'mon, my boyfriend is years younger than me, but he's walking me to school, gonna pat me on my head '\_good bye\_', and then head off for college at Burgess Institute!"

"I think it's more you're going to miss him than anything, Jack. You always whine whenever someone takes away something you're not finished with first." Emma teased.

"Hey! Hiccup ain't a toy or food or something" He glanced at the silently smiling auburnette and grinned. "Though... you do taste like really yummy food."

"What?" Hiccup looked mortified. "JACK! We're in public!"

"So? It's just Emma."

"I am so offended by that," Emma sniffed regally.

Jack ignored her and wrapped his arms around Hiccup's waist before the smaller boy could duck away. "I think I should get a kiss from those chocolate-frosting flavored lips before I get stuck in learning prison all day."

"You watched one too many romances while you were attempting to woo me, Jack." Hiccup sighed again.

"You have no idea. I couldn't tell if I was dreaming or watching TV by the end of it," Jack muttered darkly. He grinned his big, unforgettable grin. "All the more reason I should get a small, little kiss."

"Nothing you do is small,"

"Fine, a normal kiss, nothing sloppy."

"I do not kiss sloppy!"

Emma let out another short laugh at Hiccup's outraged exclamation.

Before Hiccup could say anything more (and waste valuable time) Jack leaned down and planted a firm, word-stealing kiss. It was all Hiccup could do to keep standing on his own two feet and not slither towards the ground and lean into Jack like a love-drunk buffoon. He didn't even notice that his hands involuntarily reached for Jack's snow-white hair and dragged his mouth back for a second, wilder kiss.

Jack's backpack fell to the ground with a '\*\*thunk\*\*'. He wrapped his arms tighter around Hiccup's slim frame. His lips pressed harder against Hiccup's mouth, egged on by Hiccup's slight gasp, and licked that pale soft lip. \_Always... just like the first time, only better and better.\_ Jack's numb mind managed to think before his tongue delved into Hiccup's mouth.

"HEY! HEY! WHAT ARE YOU DOING! PUBLIC PLACE, DORKOFF!" Emma's voice quickly brought them back to the present.

Jack's winter blue eyes blinked rapidly as he pulled away breathing heavily. Hiccup seemed to be in worse shape. His eyes remained half-closed and his breath was coming out in little puffs. Concern began to leak through the numb buzzing in Jack's head.

"You okay, Hic? You breathing all right?"

"N-no, not r-really. It's not your fault, however," Hiccup managed to reply in a faint, breathy voice.

"I didn't think so. I was thinking it was that illness you had as a kid. The reason you went to Berk," Jack said his pale hands on Hiccup's flushed freckled face.

"I'm completely healthy. I was just... breathless. I'm sorry if it troubles you, but I won't be able to help it. Oscillation tends to leave me breathless." A blush bloomed all pretty-like over his freckled nose and cheeks, hiding said freckles.

"Ossa-whut?" Jack said dumbly.

Hiccup flushed brighter. "Kissing."

Jack felt his grin return full force. "I kinda like that-OUCH!" Jack clutched at the back of his head in pain.

Emma stood behind him holding up her shoulder bag like a really big slingshot. "Don't make me slug you again, you stupid lummoX." He blinked at her, lost for words. She rolled her eyes. "SCHOOL, YOU IDIOT! SCHOOL!"

"Ah... yeah" Jack glanced down at his sports watch. "Well, damn. Let's start running, then."

"What?" Hiccup squeaked. Jack grabbed his thin wrist.

"Have fun on your first day, Ems!" Jack called out as he grabbed his backpack by one strap. He tore down the street, dragging poor Hiccup behind him.

"Yeah, right," Emma muttered to herself quietly as she turned away from the two ridiculously happy boys she loved dearly. If only she had something like that to look forward to at school.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Anna straightened her short green skirt nervously. A loud call of her name made her look up and a smile lit up her face. More and more voices called and more hands waved towards her. She had been dreading running into Jack so much she forgot about all her other friends and those people who knew her name. She eagerly began to chat with a young girl she knew to be in her sister's fashion designing classes. She thought she would miss them, but, then he was Jack.

"Is that Overland? It is. Who's that?"

"Is that a he? Or a she?"

"Whoever that is, she must be a newbie."

"He. It's a he."

"You can't mean-?"

"They're holding hands! Why are they gasping like that?"

"You didn't see them run in like all hell was loose?"

Anna turned with an anxious jitter in her knees. Sure enough, Jack's trademark snow-white hair was seen over the crowd and he was leaning towards a smaller, slighter figure with messed up auburn locks. Nothing knocked into her chest or tightened her belly. No flutters, nothing. Just guilt, a sick, horribly sick, guilt.

Faggot! Faggot! Faggot!

Anna swallowed and hurried towards them before the younger boy left for college.

"You all right? Sure?"

"Jack! I'm fine! You need to get to homeroom before the bell rings, don't you?"

"Yeah, but... you're all sweaty and pale, Hiccy."

Anna felt a smile tug at her lips at the tender concern in the rash Jack's voice. The look that filled Jack's face and lit up those emerald eyes pulled at her heartstrings as well. A sort of regret and still that burning guilt.

"Excuse me, but I believe I've never introduced myself properly." Her voice was calm, but so quiet.

Hiccup's back became instantly straight and his face blank. It hurt something so badly inside her to see his savagely polite expression. Jack's, however, was confused and apprehensive. Obviously, Hiccup didn't tell Jack what she had said.

"My name is Anna Arendelle and the last time we spoke there was a terrible misunderstanding, you see?" Her voice was getting faster and breathy. "I... said something very wrong to you, without knowing what was going on. I want to apologize and hope we could be friends."

Silence met her. Then, his beautiful green eyes met her own gaze. She clasped the green fabric of her skirt with trembling hands.

"You have nothing to apologize for, Anna. I should have... I should have been more open with you... and more honest with myself." He glanced swiftly up at his boyfriend. Just with that one glance, and Anna saw something that made her breath stop. It was something deeper than she could comprehend something sweeter than she had ever felt. And the regret that had touched her when she saw him smile at Jack, the regret that he couldn't love her or be happy with her, vanished without a trace. The only thing she felt was relief at the smile that

turned the corners of his mouth up.

Their hands reached forwards and clasped warmly.

"Thanks," she whispered.

"Thank you very much," he whispered back.

"What's going on?" Jack's voice interrupted angrily.

Anna knew exactly what emotion promoted his reaction: jealousy. She always wondered where his possessive streak disappeared to when he started dating her sister. He couldn't spare any for her, not in the way he used it with Hiccup. Even his arm automatically wrapped around the slim young man's waist to draw him away from the threat. Anna giggled.

"Don't worry, he's all yours. He's not my type." Anna winked at the furiously blushing and captured auburnette before walking away to find her homeroom.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Emma took a deep steadying breath. She may be pretty to some people's eyes, she may be intelligent by school standards, she may even be considered kind by a few, but she didn't have a multitude of friends. In this school, only Jamie spoke to her and liked her. Many of the other kids thought she was uppity when she really just didn't know them and was too shy to talk. Other kids thought she was too pretty or too smart to talk to and were intimidated by her quiet manner.

"I don't think this is going to go well," Emma muttered to herself as confused glances came her way. She knew exactly why they were confused.

Jamie had never let her walk alone before, not since kindergarten.

"Don't worry, just keep your chin up. It'll be all right. If you don't mind, Emma, I'd like to think of us as friends, and I'll be there for you to rely on."

Emma held Eret's words close to her heart desperately. \_If only I had Jack's confidence!\_

Laughter reached her ears and she swung around, her hair sliding over her face. Her hands clutched at the straps of her backpack as he walked through the gates with the other jocks on Jamie's team. A large bubble of feeling swelled just under her heart. It got bigger and bigger as he neared until it lodged somewhere in her throat. It became hard to swallow. Her eyes were locked on his face, so dear and familiar. His laughing dark brown eyes were hidden from her behind his eyelids, but his lips, lips she couldn't forget, were parted widely as he laughed uproariously.

As if he didn't have a care in the world for her

Her breath hitched dangerously and she felt so young again. Young and ill and weak, the Emma Jamie had never met. She had been well by the time she started school.

And then his eyes opened and met hers.

But she couldn't she couldn't face him, couldn't let him see her desperation, her need, for him. So she turned and began to walk away. She left him before she started crying in front of people she didn't know. Her damn pride refused to let her show her heart.

She didn't see the sadness cloud his normally cheerful features.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Elsa picked at her lunch sadly. She knew it was going to be lonely, but it was worse than she thought. Everyone else in the cafeteria was laughing and teasing each other over their food. Her sister wasn't there yet, they might not even share the same free period. Elsa sighed and popped her sausage in her mouth. Lunch was the worst time of the day. Just eight more months of it to go. Until next year.

"Heeeey Elsaaa!" Anna called out over the students' heads. She dragged Jack over and set her own bento box down on the table.

Elsa blinked as Anna and Jack sat themselves down... Well, Anna forced Jack to sit down. "Oh, sit down, Jack, you're being silly."

"She's the reason Hiccup cried, why he dumped me AND why Jim had to save him that one night..." Jack muttered darkly.

"You shouldn't have cheated on her first," Anna replied shortly.

"Damn it." Jack looked away, his fingers tight around his lunch box... Well, technically, Hiccup's lunch box.

"I thought you did... Haley can give stuff away sometimes." Elsa smiled bitterly. "It was my fault, though. I should've told you the truth a long time ago. At least, I should've broken up with you when he came back. I knew how you felt about him."

"Yeah, well..." Jack rubbed the back of his neck and glanced around. He pulled a desk over and plopped down. "Sorry about kissing Hiccup while I was dating you Elsa... But you really shouldn't have gotten even by doing, well, \_that.\_"

"Yeah... And... Sorry about telling him a bunch of crap."

"It actually wasn't a bunch of crap." Anna interrupted suddenly after swallowing. "How does your team feel about you being gay?"

"Well I haven't announced it or nothing, but a lot of them saw me hanging over Hiccup this morning. I got some crap, but nothing serious. I think my coach might have more crap to say at training, though." He frowned down at his teriyaki beef strips. "As long as he doesn't take away my captaincy, I think I can deal with his bitching."

"Hey, Overland! I heard you're a fairy," called out a voice.

"Crap like that?" Anna murmured jerking her head towards one the Junior students.

"Yeah," Jack muttered back. Elsa threw a deadly glare towards the jerkoff who had shouted. He ignored her, however, when the whole class went silent.

"What you doing over here, fairy? Thought you should be in practice by now, to stare at asses."

"What, You my new stalker, Hans? I know I'm so studly, but I didn't think I'd turn every guy 'round here fairy when I started liking boys," Jack drawled lazily. He took another bite of his delicious boyfriend-made lunch and almost cried from joy. \_I'm going to marry that boy! He cooks better than anything I've ever tasted!\_ He ignored the giggles that erupted after his comeback. Hans was flushing angrily.

"I heard your coach was going to knock you off the team?"

"I hope not. I'm the best thing that ever happened to this school, fairy or not." He leaned back and eyed Hans with a raised eyebrow. "Especially if they put a loser like you on the team to replace me. You couldn't even kick a stationary ball before I started being captain in junior high."

"Har har. Real funny. At least I don't like checking out my teammates butts in the shower."

"I would do no such thing," Jack sniffed arrogantly. "I definitely wouldn't be checking out yours, so you shouldn't have anything to worry about." He returned to his lunch and dismissed Hans without a second thought.

Elsa and Anna shook their heads simultaneously.

"You really should keep your mouth shut, Jack. You're going to get yourself hurt," Elsa scolded.

"'Har har, real funny,' Elsa. The guys on the team wouldn't use me for a punching bag unless I get kicked off the team. Worry then, kay?" Jack grinned his famous grin and began to shovel in more rice as he tipped the box back.

"Are you sure, Jack? Hans didn't make the team. He and his friends wouldn't give a damn about your captaincy," Anna said in a low voice. She glanced at the fuming guy warily.

"I could take on that can of trash, no problem. He has no sense of coordination or balance at all. He'd be flat on his back trying to kick me." Jack popped open his soda can and took a deep swallow.

While he was drinking his soda, a girl with pixie-cut black hair. "Hi, I'm Roxanne Richie,"

"Oh, yeah, hey." Jack turned his charming grin on her and took another swig of soda.

"I saw you with that cute guy. Do you think I could interview you for

the school paper?"

Soda fizzled out of Jack's nose as he fought to keep from spraying it over his two female friends. "WHAT?" He coughed savagely, barely able to breathe.

"I'm a newbie in the journalism class and I wanted a really good article for my first assignment. If I can get you to agree before someone else on the paper approaches you, I'll get really good brownie points for next year."

"Er..." Jack looked back at the two equally-surprised girls across from him. They shrugged back at him. "If-If Hiccup doesn't mind... I don't see why not... he's kinda shy, though."

"Well, I could ask you the questions, instead. Just a one-on-one interview, whaddya say?"

"I... guess so... I mean... sure?"

"YES! Let's start now!"

"WHAT?" The three friends cried at once.

Roxanne pulled up another chair and sat on it. She seemed unaware of the growing attention the small group was gaining. Jack, Elsa, and Anna, however, were not unaware. "So, how old are both of you? When did you first start dating? What school does the kid go to? Have you two kissed yet?" Roxanne asked with lightning speed, her pencil ready.

"Eh... say again?"

"Ugh... jocks," Roxanne groaned. The bell, mercifully, rang at that exact moment.

"Gotta go." Jack hopped up and bolted towards the exit clutching both empty soda can and empty lunch box.

"WHAT ABOUT MY INTERVIEW?"

"TRACK ME DOWN LATER!"

Anna and Elsa giggled behind their hands as they began to clear up.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Emma glanced over at him surreptitiously. He was frowning hard at a piece of paper, his tongue held between his teeth. She barely managed to hold back a smile knowing he was really concentrating on a doodle, not notes for their math class.

"Overland!" barked the teacher suddenly. Her back stiffened in surprise, and her eyes met those dark brown eyes as he looked up when her name was called. She spun away and looked towards the front.

"Yes?" She rose.

"Come to the board and do problem sixteen."

"Sixteen?" She knew it was one of the harder problems of a new lesson.

"Yes. I know you are capable of it. To the board."

"Yes." Emma quickly walked up to the board and worked out the problem with just one slight hesitation where she carried the wrong number. She fixed it quickly and circled her answer. She dropped the chalk into the tray and faced her teacher with a bowed head. "I am finished,"

Her teacher looked it over and nodded. "Good. Now, maybe you could work it out step by step for the class. They don't seem to understand me." She glared at the class.

"It is the first day," Emma pointed out softly.

"No excuse. If one of my students can understand, all of them can." Emma once again repressed another facial expression, only this time a grimace.

\_I hate teachers like that. Just because one understands, doesn't mean all of them have to! We all learn differently.\_ She began to re-work the equation, explaining each step in a way her fellow students could understand. It was easy after teaching Jamie for years how to do the harder homework problems.

Jamie watched her work and let her quiet, precise voice calm his confusion and pain. It hurt him, knowing it was her voice and it wasn't directed at him, but it made him feel good at the same time. He closed his eyes and let her words sink in without really listening- which was probably stupid of him to do as she wouldn't be helping him later. As his eyes closed, her pretty eyes were looking at him again and he wondered if he had imagined those two fleeting glances he had caught. Why would she be looking at him when she had that Dim-wit?

"Hey, Bennette?" hissed a voice. As he opened his eyes, he could almost swear her quiet, smooth voice hesitate for just a second, a very small one.

"Yeah?" He whispered back.

"Isn't that your girlfriend?"

"Yea-oh, uh, no, no... she's not" It tore him up inside just to say it and know how easily the word '\_yeah\_' almost slipped from his mouth. He hadn't said '\_no\_' in years.

"No talking during the lesson!" squawked their teacher angrily. "A warning for you two. Another warning and it'll be detention."

Jamie frowned at her when she looked away. \_Old bat.\_

Emma gripped the chalk tightly between her fingers and stared hard at the board. The teacher's words ended, but Jamie's were still ringing in her head.



\_No, no, she's not.\_

Emma forced herself to finish the problem and dropped the chalk into the tray again. She bowed wordlessly towards her teacher and walked back to her desk. She didn't hear the teacher ask the class if they now understood. She didn't hear the '\_thank you\_' they all chorused monotonously. She just heard the words of Jamie ringing in her head. She felt like sliding under her desk and disappearing into the floor, disappearing anywhere, just away to where she could cry and he couldn't see how much he had hurt her.

And it was all her own damned fault.

Finally, the last bell rang and the students all around her began to pack up. She woodenly grabbed her things, automatically put them away neatly, and zipped up her bag. She swung it over one shoulder and began to hurry towards the door. She weaved through the students and emerged in the hallway. More and more students were filling the hall. She wanted out, she wanted out now. The tears were building up, and she didn't see Jamie desperately trying to catch up with her.

He pushed through protesting students and tripped with a loud crash. He looked up in time to see her push through the front doors.

"Damn it!" He pushed off the ground ignoring the angry cries of pain as his bag hit students who got in the way of its wild swinging. He shoved through the doors and looked around desperately.

He finally caught sight of her.

Emma tightened her grip on the straps of her bag. She could see kids she recognized from elementary school pointing her way. She knew what they were saying, still gossiping.

She had finally ditched her loser boyfriend. She finally decided she was too good for him. She dumped Jamie. Of course, he wasn't good enough for her. She was finally fed up with a boyfriend more stupid than her.

All of them were so stupid! They didn't know anything! She didn't want to break up with him! Ironically, he had broken up with her! Emma felt hysterical laughter bubble up within her. She pressed her lips tighter together and looked towards the gate. Her footsteps slowed as a familiar figure stepped forward and raised a hand awkwardly. Then, her feet were moving again and she felt cut from her body. She was racing towards the wide-eyed figure, tears falling from her eyes, and her arms outstretching at the last second, but she was strangely numb, watching the scene from somewhere outside herself. Then, his clean laundry smell filled her nose and she was back in herself, sobbing silently into his shirt and clutching him tightly.

"Why are you here?"

"I thought... I thought your first day back would be rough on you. It is the least I could do for my friend to be there for her," his calm voice explained.

"Eret, I'm so sorry! I just... I just couldn't help it. I saw you and thought... you'd keep it a secret if I cried today."

"Yes, Emma, I will keep it a secret, you don't have to worry. I promised, didn't I?"

"Y-Yes." He led her away from the corridors with one arm around her shoulders.

Jamie stood staring after the retreating pair.

"Wh-whywhy was she with him?" He murmured. His fingers tightened around the thick strap of his bag convulsively. "What's going on, Emma?"

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

"Can you believe it? I can't believe we didn't know!"

"A whole year! Nobody knew for a whole year!"

Jim rolled his eyes. Once again, he felt like he was in a class of children. He sighed in annoyance. They were all whispering about the news about their teacher from last year coming out as gay. The guy was a great teacher and a really good guy. Jim had figured out he was gay last year during class, but it never changed his opinion of the man himself. Some people, however, did not know how to separate the personal from the professional, or how to keep their manners intact. Luckily, it was the end of day and he could escape at long last.

"Hawkins, what about you?"

"Huh?" Jim looked up at his fellow classmate with his books in his hands.

"About Mr. Hummel, about him dating a guy. Aren't you angry or surprised or anything?"

"Not really. Who the hell would give a damn if he's homosexual? Besides, I figured it out last year." Jim shrugged and put his books into his knapsack. He looked up to see their incredulous stares. "They're good teachers; their sexual preferences meant nothing to me unless it interfered with teaching. All of you loved him last year, why should your opinions change? Because he didn't tell his students he had a boyfriend? It's nobody's business but his own,"

"Jeez, just asking."

"Dude, did you forget? That guy's half-a-fairy."

"Oh, right..."

Jim scoffed, cursing once more for losing his board. He could high-tail it out of school and just head to the park. He adjusted the pack more comfortably on his hip and began to leave the study hall.

"Jimmy!"

Jim turned around towards the school as a scrawny guy with large-framed glasses called out his name. He ran up to him and

started breathing harshly. Behind him, Jim's saw three more guys whispering and snickering behind their hands.

"It's Jim, Ben. What is it?"

"I-I wanted to apologize!"

"Okay, what?" Jim blinked as Ben wheezed desperately.

He quickly straightened and blushed. "I was kinda checking you out today..."

Jim stared, his shirt being lightly blown by the breeze, showing off his shoulder blades. "Eh?"

"I... I thought it was rude to think those thoughts..."

"Thoughts?"

"But it's just... I really like you, Jimmy!"

"Uh, it's Jim, and... \_What\_...?"

"Yeah!" His fists came up to cover his mouth, his face blushing bright tomato-red. "Uh, BYE JIM!" he screamed. He spun around and fled. Ben disappeared into the huddle leaving Jim blinking dazedly.

"Jimbo!"

Jim immediately felt his hackles rise at the name, and then he calmed immediately and blushed vividly when he recognized the voice. A hand fell on his shoulder and he felt his skin burn under his shirt. He looked up slowly to meet Dimitri's eyes.

"W-W-What are you doing here!" Jim barely managed to force out.

Dimitri smiled pleasantly. "I got you something and couldn't wait to give it." he handed over a brand-new skateboard, Jim could only gawk. He chuckled. "Didn't have extra to buy a gift wrapper."

"Seriously?" Jim absently took the board. "like, seriously, why are you bothering with me?"

Dimitri winked. "That's for me to know and for you to find out... If you come with me right now. We'll have some cake, okay?"

Jim gulped and began to let Dimitri drag him away from school.

**\*\*Author's Note:** I have nothing to add. XD Meaningful reviews folks, is all I ask for. Not necessarily lengthy. Just make it meaningfully. Couples getting together at the next chap, guess who xD\*\*

## 12. My Guardian Realization

**\*\*Author's Notes:** Okay, this is what happens when you love your

friends too much, even if they are cyberfriends. Lord Zerthin, another speed update for you and your dragon Ormise. xD Hope you and everyone else enjoys.\*\*

\*\*Disclaimer: I own nothing.\*\*

\*\*My Guardian\*\*

\*\*Chapter Twelve\*\*

\*\*My Guardian Realization\*\*

Emma kept her face hidden against Eret's shoulder. She couldn't bear to let anyone see her tears, her weakness. Eret might be able to feel the wetness, the evidence of her feebleness, but he couldn't see them. She didn't want him to see them again. She hated falling apart!

"What happened?"

"N-nothing." Emma shook her head and forced a laugh. "He... he just told the truth."

"What do you mean?"

"I was up at the board... when I heard another student ask Jamie if I was his girlfriend." A low sob caught in her throat. "For years... for years he said '\_yeah, isn't she so perfect?\_' This time... this time he just... he just said no."

"I'm sorry."

"It must sound so stupid to you. Of course he was going to say... say no." Emma pushed away and swiped at her eyes angrily.

"No! I don't think it sounds stupid at all," Eret protested quickly. He touched her shoulder and gently nudged her around to face him.

Her eyes were veined red and her eyelids were puffy. Tear tracks marred her smooth face and her lips were red and swollen from biting away the sobbing noise in her throat. He gently brushed her hair away from her face where it was stuck to her skin. Her thick black lashes fluttered. Small drops fell from her lashes to her cheeks.

"I-I I don't think you're stupid at all, Emma." Eret whispered. Emma felt herself lean towards him and those eyes that gazed at her so intently.

"Thank you," Emma whispered back. She pulled herself away from him and looked down to her dark brown loafers. "We should get back to my apartment. I have some homework in math and literary Classics. And you probably need help in your own works."

"Okay." Eret placed a hand on her shoulder briefly, and then walked past her towards her apartment complex.

Emma looked up towards the sky. Her fists clenched tightly by her thighs and her eyes squeezed shut. \_Jay... I miss you... so much. \_She turned on her heel and quickly caught up to her pupil.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

"Fairy! Can you believe that? He called Jack a fairy!" Anna laughed uproariously.

Cristoff began to chuckle behind his hand. "What happened next?" He asked genuinely interested as he leaned forward. He took a bite of ice cream sundae.

"Well-AYAAA!" Almost everyone in the shop jumped at her loud squeal.

"What?" Cristoff dropped the spoon and spun in his seat, expecting a burglar or something. The spoon hit the glass dish, bounced off onto the table, and splattered ice cream and hot fudge everywhere. And no burglar was in sight.

"Quick, to the bathroom!" Anna hissed. She grabbed his hand and yanked him towards the bathroom. After throwing open the door, she pushed Cristoff in, right on his heels, before she spun around. She left the door just barely open and peered through the crack.

"What's going on?" Cristoff shrieked.

Anna's slim, little hand covered his mouth. She turned towards him, her pursed lips covered with a single finger.

"Shhhhhh," she hissed. She quickly turned back to the door as her hand slid off of his mouth. The palm of her hand lightly brushed his lips leaving behind a slight tickling feeling. He felt a blush heat his cheeks and he completely forgot he was hiding in an unlit bathroom with a person of the opposite gender. "Look, Cristoff!"

Cristoff shook his head at her urgent tone and peeked out into the shop over her head. "What am I looking for?"

"Them. It's Aster's younger brother and another guy."

"Oh? I see them." Cristoff blinked and squinted. "I know that boy. It's Jim. Hale knows him."

"He's so cuute!"

"Really? Cause I wouldn't know. I'm straight and a dude."

"YES HE IS! I wonder if they're on a date?" Anna squealed excitedly, her face flushed.

"Uhhh, again, I wouldn't know. Why are you hiding in a public restroom spying on them?"

"Because! I don't want them to see us and get flustered. I wanna see what happens!"

"Just because Jack and Hale are gay, doesn't mean every other pairing of boys is."

"Shhhhhh!"

Cristoff sighed.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Jack leaned his head back against the wet brick. As per schedule, it was snowboarding tryouts and skiing practice today and it had been hell. A few idiots notably, seniors refused to hear his plays. And Jack doubted it was for the reason that he was younger than them. A few kept getting on his path and running him over. It bugged him, especially that one time that when he was teaching the newbies, supervising their tryouts, and two players supposedly racing each other knocked him over. He had stuck it out, though, and managed to make it through with some scratches, a bruise or two, and a lot of snow getting into his uniform, but the cold never bugged him at least. A few of the kids his age were loyal to a fault, however, and had helped out a bit.

Jack had a feeling it would take a while before everyone accepted him, though.

He turned the steaming water off and pushed open the curtain. Captains had a few privileges, one of which being a separate shower from the communal. It helped a lot more than he thought initially. No crude marks about '\_bending over\_' and '\_dropping the soap\_'. He grabbed his towel, dried off, and rubbed down his hair vigorously. When his arms got tired, he dropped the towel and began to dress in his clothes, his favorite blue hoodie, skinny jeans, a jacket and scarf.

"Overland!"

Jack looked around the wall towards the locker room and pulled his scarf on. "Yeah?"

"Your boyfriend going to come pick you up?"

"I sure as hell hope not! Three blockheads might steal him away from me." Jack gave them a big, grin and grabbed the rest of his stuff. "You guys better get better or I'm holding tryouts again." He left the locker room without a glance back.

"Overland! You don't have a manager yet, so picking up is your duty!" shouted his loud-mouthed coach's voice.

"Oh, damn," Jack muttered. "All right, Coach! I'm on it."

His coach gave him a silent nod of approval-something Jack realized meant more than just his willingness to pick up the slack. His coach didn't mind he was gay unless it interfered with how he worked in the team. He set his bag and duffel bag on the ground, and then laid jacket and scarf on top. He rolled up his sleeves and set out to organize the boards used. Players can use their own snowboards if they want, as well as ski equipments, but for those who didn't have their own, the team provided for it, although the players weren't allowed to take them home. After thirty minutes of working, Jack finally went into the supply shed for the last time.

"Thank god!" Jack wiped his forehead and looked down at his pits, cold in Burgess or not, one can still break a sweat. "I'm going to

have to take a shower again." He gave a defeated sigh and pushed the cones on their shelf more securely.

"Hey, Overland."

"What now?" Jack turned a bit exasperated. He blinked and then grinned. "That's bit different from usual." He joked to the large group of seniors blocking the door.

"It's time we wipe that smug grin off your face."

"I really wouldn't say I'm smug... just confident." Jack settled back on his heels and curled his fingers into fists.

"Arrogant is more like it. You should be lucky the coach likes you enough to let you stay captain. We can't beat you up too much."

"Exactly what I thought," Jack agreed. Without letting him think, a guy dashed forward and managed to punch him in the nose and another in the stomach. Jack grunted, moving back. "Oh yeah, fun times."

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Jim stirred his swiss mocha drink silently as Dimitri sets a small plate of cake in front of him.

"Uh, I didn't realize you'd be paying." Jim blushed, tapping his spoon against the cup.

"I wanted to." Dimitri propped his elbows up on the table and laid his chin on his interlaced fingers. He tilted his head and smiled pleasantly at the younger blushing boy. "I have the feeling you are embarrassed."

"What, no! Just... a lot of things happened to me today."

"Besides your classmate's confession?" Dimitri teased his eyes twinkling.

Jim glanced up shocked. "You heard that?"

"I had been waiting a while. I've been homeschooled a while so I forgot when Junior high classes end."

"It gets out before High school,"

"Which is why I was confused as to why it took you so long to leave."

"Er... After school traffic, you know how it is."

"Oh. That explains it then." He smiled fondly at Jim and took a bite of chocolate mousse cake. "So, what was it?"

"What?"

"What kind of traffic you got caught in?"

Jim fiddled with the shop napkin. "Well, my last period is

gym."

"What happened?" Dimitri's eyes narrowed, knowing all the possibilities of catastrophes that can happen before, during, and after gym class.

Jim groaned, needing to vent. "Just... remember that dick on that night we found Haley in the rain?"

"All too well, what did he do?"

"Well, as usual, he got on my case when we were in the locker room after class, we're the last two left, and he was messing with my stuff. I was pissed and got on his face about minding his own business and he kept throwing stuff at him about '\_bending over\_' or '\_dropping the soap\_' to check him out, damn bastard!" Jim scowled, shaking his arms, his hands in a fist. Then he shivered, sighing. "I stood my ground and told him he was just insecure, tryin' to hide it by making other people feel bad, and just when I wanted to end our screaming match with a '\_you're not my type.\_' \_to counter his crude comments on checking him out, he damned kissed me!"

Dimitri widened his eyes. "He.. did... \_what?!\_" He clenched his fists, ebbing the rage threatening to surface.

Jim wasn't listening, though, he just looked troubled. "Damn bastard... That was my first kiss too..." He tightened his grip on the cup.

Two larger hands than his wrapped around his fingers and pressed lightly. "Jim, just say the word, I'll come over and beat the bullcrap out of the guy."

"Huh?" Jim blinked, looking surprised, just noticing that Dimitri's hands were pressed on his own. "what are you saying?"

Those smooth hands pressed against Jim's just a bit more. "I'm saying, I don't want anything to happen to you."

"I'm fine, Dimwit, sheesh, I may be bi but I'm not helpless like some damsel." Jim smirked, shaking his head.

"I'm not joking Jim," Jim blinked at the intensity of Dimitri's words. "that night out in the rain, a number of things could've gone wrong, I kept thinking about what could've happen if I hadn't gotten there when I did. And... I was just glad nothing really happened."

Jim scrutinized Dimitri's face. "It is what it is. It's hard to be different, but you just live with it." he said. "you, you're pretty different, too." \_Why is he so... Protective? We just met fairly recent, but why do I feel like he wants to keep me secured? Why... Do I want him to take the responsibility? \_But Jim knew, he liked Dimitri being around. He felt... safe. Jim had always craved for that kind of love and attention from a man, something he never got from his dad even when he was still with them. It's what led him to being bi.

\*\*\*"People who keep secrets about themselves are cowards, like that dick. They lock up their hearts so tight they forget they have one.



I'm glad... I'm glad you could me tell your secret, Jim. It makes me think I could tell mine soon. At least... at least, I could tell you."\*\*

Jim chuckled and closed his eyes. In the darkness, he could pretend nobody else was around him, only Dimitri's voice could be heard. He hadn't been able to forget what Dimitri had told him at Astrid's party for Hiccup. It seemed it was always there, lurking the back of his mind and leaping at him when he least expected it. Jim frowned then. "Dimitri, what... what secret... what secret makes you forget your heart?" He thought maybe he spoke it too low for Dimitri to hear.

Then, his beautiful hands drew away. In some sort of panic, Jim opened his eyes, one hand reaching out to grasp Dimitri's before quickly retreating. Their eyes met for instant. That instant sizzled between them until Jim's sharp gaze caught Dimitri's lips beginning to move.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Jamie barely heard Astrid's chatter. Emma's flight into yet another boy's arms couldn't leave his mind. He followed Astrid through the park, the snow pressed under his sneakers.

"Jay?"

"Don't call me that!" Jamie spat savagely.

Astrid took a surprised step backward. "S-Sorry," she automatically apologized. She blinked and then her mouth began to twitch. "WHAT THE HELL IS YOUR PROBLEM? YOU'VE BEEN IGNORING ME FOR THE PAST HOUR! THEN YOU SNAP AT ME!"

"IT'S NONE OF YOUR DAMN BUSINESS, YOU NOSY BUSYBODY!"

"I'M TRYING TO BE YOUR FRIEND!"

"BACK OFF!" Jamie screamed.

"Just tell me what's wrong!" Astrid's hand grasped his sleeve and stopped his forward momentum. "I... I want to know what's hurting you, Jamie. I... I really like you. I can't help but think of you when you're not with me. And when you are... you make me so frustrated and happy!" Tears slipped down her cheeks. "Can't you trust me? Can't you love me?"

"Astrid?"

"Did you know I loved a boy once? But he brushed me off, saying I freaked him out, for being feisty, for being a tad violent... for being '\_hardcore.\_'"

"Astrid, sorr-"

"DON'T SAY YOU'RE SORRY!" she shouted at him. She stepped up to him and raised her tear-stained face. "Just let me love you and say... say nothing at all." Her toes raised her from the ground and she tilted her head to side.

Jamie's eyes widened as soft, wet lips pressed timidly against his own. Emma's gorgeous eyes burned into his mind, but he pushed them away angrily. With eyes closing, he raised his hands and grasped Astrid's shoulders firmly. He pulled her up against him and pressed back against her mouth. A small whimpering noise met his ears and Astrid's hands gripped the cotton material of his shirt. As they drew away, their eyes fluttered open. Their eyes met, both filled with surprise... and identical need.

Their lips met again fiercer then before. His arms wrapped around her waist and their bodies were pressed so tightly together that they seemed to be melded together.

Finally, Astrid pulled away, and smiled. Suddenly, she punched Jamie on the shoulder.

"OW! The hell, Astrid?"

"That's for snapping at me earlier," she chuckled, then leaned over to kiss his cheek. "That," she smiled, and Jamie smiled back at the next words. "is for everthing else that followed."

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

"I... I have the same kind of secret you had, Jim, the same secret you can't tell your mom." Serious eyes met curious ones. "I've... I've been stupid... and hurt a dear friend of mine because I couldn't... because I wouldn't let her tell anyone else. I don't want to make the same mistake again."

"Dimitri?"

"I...I'm gay, Jim, flatout. And I want you." Dimitri confessed, Jim slapped his hand on his mouth in shock. "I don't expect anything, I'll wait until you're ready. I'll be waiting for you... but I'd rather... you'd tell me now whether I need to." Those eyes cut into Jim deeply.

"Okay."

"What?" exhaled Dimitri in surprise.

"We can try." Jim smiled shyly. "I've been looking for someone... someone to fill the gap here," he pressed his palm to his chest, where his heart should be. "the empty space that my dad should've filled." his eyes glowed softly, determinedly.

Dimitri grinned, like he wanted his face to split. "Sooo, I'm your papa?"

"What! Don't put it that way!" Jim trailed away and covered his eyes with dark lashes.

"Hey, don't get all shy, now!" Dimitri leaned over the table and cupped Jim's cheek. He brought the younger boy's face around until their gazes met again. Dimitri grinned. "I'll fill your gap, I promise."

"Thank you." Jim's smile seemed to make his whole face shine.

"No problem, Jimbo. Now, to deal with that problem of your first kiss."

Jim raised a brow. "What are you-" he was cut off when Dimitri grabbed his face and, with his arm, roughly rubbed against his lips. He made muffled protest, before breaking away. "What the hell was that about, Dimwit!"

"Erasing that error first kiss."

Jim rolled his eyes. "It doesn't work that wa-" he trailed off once more as Dimitri grabbed his head, once more, and kissed him square on the mouth. Jim widened his eyes, barely making a decision to kiss back, because Dimitri pulled away before anyone can see.

"Does it work now?"

Jim blushed furiously.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

"How cuuute! Did you see that?" Anna gushed happily.

"Yaaaah. We don't know what they said, however, so we don't know exactly what was going on," Cristoff pointed out.

"Oh come on!" Anna whirled around and flung herself at him, fists raised. The door closed behind her enveloping them in darkness. She didn't seem to notice. "They were obviously spilling their hearts out! It's young, pure love! And you just go on and sigh! Where's your romantic side?" Anna argued, pouting and fists flailing.

"My practicality holds a stronger sway. Love doesn't even develop that fast."

"What are you, some love expert?"

"No, but I have friends who are... And I would rather know than guess," he explained.

"ARRRGGGHHH!"

Suddenly, light flooded the room and they looked towards the door blinking away spots. An amused, yet irritated-looking employee was in the doorway, her hand still on the switch.

"Would you kindly fight outside? People need to piss."

They blinked again and then flushed up to their hairlines.

"We're sorry!" They hurried away with their heads lowered.

Fortunately for the two amateur spies, their quarries were too busy to notice them. Plus, the amateur spies also chose a bad time to exit, missing the kiss they shared entirely.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Jack limped up the staircase. He wiped at the blood on his chin,

wincing as he touched the cut on his lip. He dusted snow off his hoodie, and pulled his scarf higher to cover up the lower bruises and sighed. Dirt stains were obvious on his snow-white hair. He pushed open the door filled with apprehension.

"Snowflake, dinner is almost done! I didn't think you'd be so late!" Hiccup said as he peeked around the kitchen doorjamb.

Jack grinned at the name, then sniffed the air with appreciation, and then Toothless bounded over, lapping at him. Jack laughed, stroking the canine behind the ears. He was abruptly glad he had decided on coming here instead of home. Plus... Thiana always gets so screechy. He tugged his feet out of his shoes and stepped into the cold floor.

"Aster is going to angry. He doesn't want you to be late for practice this close to the concert," Hiccup continued on, disappearing back into the kitchen.

"Yeah, yeah." Jack shrugged and walked into the kitchen. Hiccup was fiddling with food on the stove and he turned to the bathroom quickly. "I'm going to go wash up. I ended up having to pick up the supplies after I'd already taken a shower, so I'm sweaty again."

"Just clean up a little bit, don't take a shower now!" Hiccup called after him.

Minutes later, Jack walked in with another sigh. He had cleaned up most of everything, but the cut on his lip was suspicious enough without the black eye and the band-aid on one eyebrow. \_I should've picked mom's screeching. Hiccup's going to be worse.\_

"Beef stir-fry and... WHAT HAPPENED!" Hiccup ran to the table and dropped the plates onto the wooden surface. Toothless had jolted, surprise, a fish chew toy falling from his mouth. In moments, he had darted around the table, cupping Jack's face in his small hands. "What did you do?"

"I didn't do anything, really!"

Emerald eyes narrowed. "Who did it to you?"

Jack grinned edgily. "Nobody important."

"The members on your team did this to you," Hiccup deduced within one breath and the next. His freckled face flushed red with anger, the points of his ears burning.

"Hic..."

"I can't believe this! You said nothing like that would happen if you were allowed to remain captain!" Hiccup reminded him, seething.

"Nah, I just said they wouldn't beat me senseless if I stayed the captain," Jack demurred, grinning.

"How dare you joke about this!"

"Whoa, Hiccup!" Jack stepped back, hands high, eyes wide, grin gone.

Toothless scratched behind his ears, watching the two boys curiously.

"Those Bastards! Those narrow-minded imbeciles. How dare they do this to you!" Hiccup was literally shaking with rage. His hands were clenching and unclenching, knuckles bloodless as he squeezed.

"Hic, they'll get over it, I promise," Jack tried to soothe, placing his hands on Hiccup's shoulders to hold him steady, half-fearing his adorable boyfriend would start exploding things.

"In the meantime you'll just let them beat you into a bloody pulp?" Hiccup hissed at him.

"Hey! I ain't that bad! I managed to knock two out after the first punches before the other three. I think I came out pretty good."

"There were five of them?"

"Well, three, really, I took out two, remember?" Jack chuckled weakly.

Hiccup sunk into a chair and dropped his head into his hands. Jack blinked, surprised at the sudden mood swing. His surprise evaporated when he noticed Hiccup's shoulders shake.

"Hiccup, please don't cry!" Jack begged, dropping to his knees. "babe, come on, look at me..."

Toothless approached his master, whinnying and nuzzling his foot.

Hiccup shook his head. "She was right, wasn't she? I'm only going to make your life worse," his quiet voice brokenly murmured.

"Elsa was wrong, Hic."

Hiccup glanced up at the tone in which Jack spoke. Blue eyes were utterly serious and boring into Hiccup's.

"You make me the happiest I've ever been. Just being near you, or even thinking about you, makes me feel better about myself. Knowing how long you've loved me and how long you've wanted to come back for me, knowing how much you'd sacrifice to make me happy, that makes me the happiest, luckiest seventeen-year-old who's ever lived. I don't care if I get beat up for being a fairy and I don't care if I get kicked off the team, even. I love you, Hiccup. I have since I was thirteen... I might have even loved you when I was seven, I don't know, but I definitely love you now. Please, please... Don't leave me again. I don't ever want to feel like that again."

"Feel like what?"

"Lonely and and abandoned, like I did something wrong." Jack grasped Hiccup's chin and pulled him forward. His lips hovered over Hiccup's, their eyes both just barely open. "I love you."

"I love you, too," Hiccup whispered.

Their lips finally met and Hiccup took handfuls of Jack's hoodie to pull him closer. Jack's hand moved to cup the back of Hiccup's head and his other arm snaked around his waist. Hiccup was soon half-off the chair and half-on Jack's thigh with his arms wrapped around Jack's neck. Jack rose, lifting Hiccup up with him. Jack shrugged out of his jacket, not caring where it fell, and then pulled Hiccup back into his arms. Hiccup's toes lifted off the floor, but the boy didn't even seem to notice. Somewhere in the back of Jack's mind '\_bed\_' was being shouted.

The front door crashed open with a loud screech. The 'loud screech' was really Anna yelling at Cristoff, but it was cut off abruptly as her eyes fell on the two heavily making-out gay boys.

"AAAAIIIIIIYYYYEEEEEE! GAY BOYS ARE FORNICATING IN THE HALLWAY! CUUUUUTE!"

The two flew apart and fell against opposite walls clutching their chests and gasping. Toothless snarled in hostility, retreating to Hiccup's room to escape human noises.

"WHAT THE HELL?" Jack roared as soon as he caught his breath.

"Sorry, we didn't realize-" Cristoff began to placate, blushing brightly.

"I'm so bringing a camera next time," Anna gushed.

"Uhm... aren't you... uhm... upset?" Hiccup timidly put forth.

"Oh, I so got over it-"

"And became obsessed with slash pairs instead," Jack muttered darkly, glaring at her.

"HEY! Boy love is soooo cute! If I hadn't been on the receiving of being dumped, I so would've pushed these two together. Aren't they just cuuute?" Her eyes sparkled.

"Ah."

"Er."

"I swear the next time she drawls out cute like that... Just ugh... Anna," Cristoff took her shoulders and pushed her towards the kitchen. "Dinner is ready, why don't we have some."

"I am hungry..."

The two 'cuuute gay boys' glanced at each other and began to chuckle behind their hands, blushing slightly. They followed the two into the kitchen.

\_What... what was that? I... I've never had that reaction before. It went straight to my gut. There's... there's something inside my head

I can't reach. I... I want to know what it is. \_Jack glanced at his petite boyfriend and felt that stirring in his belly. \_I think... I think... I want to have sex with him... \_Jack blushed heavily and quickly began to shovel food into his mouth. \_What am I thinking! He's not even fifteen! And I just turned seventeen! We're both too young for that. Is that all I've been feeling this whole time? \_Jack set his plate down and stared down at it. \_I've always said only Hiccup's been able to affect me, maybe it's because I want to do him... No, that doesn't make sense... he did the same thing to me when I was seven years old and we kissed. I couldn't have been wanting to have sex with him when I was seven. \_He nodded at his silent rice and began to shovel in food with more vigor. He slammed it back down.\_ That doesn't change the fact I want to do him now. Gawd... what am I going to do?\_

Jack didn't notice everyone's eyes on him. He scratched his head with both hands in aggravation and then grabbed his plate. "I'm just going to eat," he announced out loud, though he seemed to have directed it inward.

"I'm glad you decided that. That's the purpose of food, right?" Hiccup raised an eyebrow.

Jack promptly blushed brighter, looked away, gulped down his food in a disgustingly record time, and jumped up. "BAND PRACTICE!"

Everyone stared at him with spoons halfway to their mouths and wide eyes. Jack was running out the door, red from his neck to his hairline to his ears, before they could even say good-bye.

"What's wrong with him?" Hiccup muttered as the door slammed.

"What were you doing when we walked in?" Anna questioned with a gleam in her eye.

"..." Hiccup blushed as red as his hair. "Kissing"

"And where was he taking you?"

"Uhhh... the bedroom, I guess," Hiccup said pensively. "It must have been the room. There is more privacy there," he stated, eyeing Anna pointedly. Which she ignored easily.

"INCORRECT! He's a seventeen year old boy. What do most seventeen year old boys, or just boys in general, do when they make out?" anna asked in her very-best-teacherish voice.

"Ah, I don't know" Hiccup glanced at Cristoff at a complete loss but he was looking away and blushing.

Anna smirked and adjusted glass that weren't there. "They get horny, Hale-dear."

"EH?"

"Yup. Poor little Jackie just got really horny for the first time and got confused. Mr.

\_I'm-so-in-tune-with-all-my-emotions-I'm-almost-a-girl\_ Jackson Overland has never got it up for anybody. I mean, wet-dreams when you go through puberty are one thing, but when you start dating for real

and get intimate, it's completely different. My sister complained a bunch of times about Jack's total lack of interest. They barely ever kissed. You just confused the crap out of him, Haley. Good job!"

"EH?" Hiccup repeated, still dumbstruck.

"She's right, Hale. Sixteen to seventeen is when a guy's libido starts working overdrive. It was only a matter of time, I'm afraid," Cristoff agreed, sighing.

"But I'm only fourteen... and a half!" Hiccup protested.

"Jack isn't, Haley." Anna was suddenly very serious. "I've dated a few high school guys, and sex is almost constantly on their minds. A lot of them are '\_give them an inch, they take a mile\_' guys. You got to make sure you and Jack have boundaries before it gets too serious."

"So... I shouldn't kiss him anymore?" There's a definite sadness in Hiccup's voice as he spoke.

"NO!" Anna laughed. "You don't have to go that far! Just... make out and stuff, but when he starts moving faster than you, make sure he hears '\_no\_'. All the blood just kinda rushes to their head. You don't want to knee him in the groin to make him pay attention, do you?"

"NO!" Hiccup cried out, horrified, as Cristoff winced and crossed his legs.

"Good, then make sure you don't just lay back and whimper. You have to make sure he realizes you mean '\_no\_', or else he'll do something that will hurt him more than it hurts you. Jack loves you enough, I'm sure, that hurting you will kill him. But he won't know he's hurting you until it's too late if you don't pluck up and say something," Anna warned.

"You're right. Thank you." He smiled at her. "I am glad you noticed. I would have been very confused and probably afraid if you hadn't warned me. It could have led to an overreaction."

"Why would you be afraid of Jack?" Cristoff asked incredulously.

"I wouldn't be afraid of him... just afraid of disappointing him or hurting his feelings." Hiccup smiled sadly. "He's gone through so much to be with me, the least I can do is be the best boyfriend I can be and make the struggle worth it."

"How sweet," Anna murmured.

\*\* 3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Astrid hung up her phone with a little sigh. A huge weight fell off her heart as she turned her eyes towards her brand-spanking-new boyfriend. \_He kissed me back!\_ She thought joyfully.

"Who called?" Jamie asked looking up from his math workbook. She had been helping him with it just minutes before. She wasn't very patient or very good at explaining in lay-man's terms, but she knew what she



was talking about and could draw it out slowly for him until he understood.

"A friend, name's Jim. Apparently he's just like me and found his own honey today too. I'm really glad!"\_ Mostly Because of you.\_

"Jim... that name sounds familiar."

"Well, I did mention him to you as my best friend since we were babies," Astrid teased.

Jamie stuck his tongue out at her. "So, he's got a boyfriend. That makes three gay guys I know. Do I know his boyfriend?"

"You might... It's a small world. His name is Dimitri Sudayev. He's E. Aster Bunnymund's brother, the guy who formed Easter Manuevers, I'm sure you heard of them." she added on, just to make sure he got it.

Jamie dropped his workbook and his eyes grew wide. Astrid began to fuzz out like a bad picture, as well as her bedroom.

"He's gay?" Jamie asked hoarsely, his voice sounding as if it were coming from a tunnel.

"Um, yeah... he's dating Jim as of today," Astrid replied, puzzlement growing.

Then, everything odd, everything weird, that Emma refused to answer clicked into place.

\_He was never competition! He's gay! She couldn't tell me because he trusted his secret to her until he could tell others. She... she never cheated on me... Did she ever stop loving me either?\_

"Jamie?"

Jamie felt his cheeks and was amazed when his fingers came away wet. "What have I done?" he whispered.

"Jamie?" Astrid's voice was slightly panicky. "What are you talking about?"

He merely hid his face in his hands and tried not to cry again. It was all his own damn fault.

**\*\*Author's Notes: Okay, Jim's ranting? Taken off inspiration from Glee, the episode '\*\*\_\*\*Never been kissed.' \*\*\_\*\*when Kurt first meets Blaine. So I don't own it. To also confirm, Anna and Cristoff missed the kiss.\*\***

### 13. My Guardian Choices

**\*\*Author's Notes: Yo, I realize I've been gone too long. Sorry, my life's catching up to me. But hey, I'm back. So let's get this started, shall we?\*\***

**\*\*Disclaimer: I own nothing.\*\***

**\*\*My Guardian\*\***

**\*\*Chapter Thirteen\*\***

**\*\*My Guardian Choices\*\***

Hiccup lifted his face to the autumn breeze mixed with the winter scent from the snow basically peppered with dead leaves. The first week of school had come and gone and it was now Friday again, the day before Easter Manuevers' first concert of the school year. Jack had been getting more and more nervous and up practicing later and later as the days disappeared. When Hiccup had tried to voice his concern, Jack had just shrugged him off.

"I'm fine, really, Hic. I got it downâ€¦ I really do, but you know Aster. He's so paranoid he makes everyone else paranoid. I always get my practice done, but then Aster just does this look like I need to do better and I think I've done the routine all wrong and freak out and do it over again at least two times before I realize I did it right every time."

Then, he'd grin and scratch the back of his head. And run to the dance studio and practice one more timeâ€¦or twoâ€¦or three.

Though his constant nervousness cut into their time together, Hiccup wasn't too put out by it. Jack was excited about it, despite his protests against it initially. He was happy that he was part of a group of guys older than him who accepted him as both a newbie performer and a newbie homosexual.

Another reason Hiccup wasn't too put out by it was the conversation he had had with Anna and Cristoff. The idea of having a more physically demanding boyfriend had never occurred to him. He had never really been physical himself. His parents hugged him, even his dad on occasion, but he had always been shy and awkward about it. Being around Jack he was definitely more physical, but not to where clothes came off and frightening choices had to be made.

'\_Sex or no sex\_' was definitely a scary choice to make. What if he chose wrong and hurt them both? What if his choice made Jack angry or feeling insufficient? What if his choice led him to a circumstance he regretted or Jack regretted? Just thinking about it to himself was scary, let alone speaking about it with Jack.

He loved Jack very much. Nobody could deny that. Jack had been his friend and personal savior since he was five years old, no matter the distance. It was the memory of that cheerful smile that encouraged him through all the lonely times. They encouraged him to make friends. That prompted him into driving himself harder, graduating faster, urging him back to Burgess and this new amazing life full of friends and liberty. There had never been another person to fill him with bravery, false or not, when he was feeling scared. As Jack often said about him, nobody had ever affected Hiccup the way Jack did.

But physical intimacy was another thing entirely. As he told Anna and Cristoff, he was only fourteen-years-old... and a half. He would fifteen in a matter of weeks, but fifteen was still too young for that stuff-seventeen was! Age of consent may be between 13 and 18

years of age... but a person couldn't even drive until twenty! It just seemed to Hiccup that sex before he was an adult was wrong. Sex... Gay sex, to be technical... Hiccup had never thought had never actually thought of it at all, so he had never looked it up. Thinking on that, what made sodomy different from the sex two homosexual males committed? Was there a difference in the eyes of the law?

"Whatchya thinkin' 'bout, Hiccy?" Jack asked suddenly, looking down at Hiccup as they walked down the sidewalk towards the Hiccup's flat.

"I'm wondering about the difference between sodomy and homosexual male sex," Hiccup answered vaguely, frowning as he spoke.

Jack choked loudly. "What?"

Hiccup looked over at him and barely bit back a smile. Jack was red in the face, looking as if he had just socked him in the face. "It's just a passing thought," he assured him.

"B-butâ€¦whyâ€¦ I didn't think you thought about that stuffâ€¦" Under the confusion was something like shame and hope mixed together.

Hiccup's brows drew together at the tone. Anna seemed to have hit the nail on the head.

"I normally don't think about sex; that's true. Anna, Cristoff, and I had a talk aboutâ€¦ sexual frustrations of the male gender. I actually think we need to talk about it, too." Luckily, Hiccup was still in his *not quite thinking about what he was saying* because he was thinking about something else\* mode and wasn't embarrassed by what he had finally managed to blurt out. In other words, he was in a bit too philosophical a mood to realize how personal the conversation was.

"Ehâ€¦I guess soâ€¦" Jack looked distinctly uncomfortable and embarrassed.

"Yes. We should wait until we get to my apartment for privacy," Hiccup agreed easily.

"Yeah." Jack let out a relieved sigh. "That would be good. I thought maybe you would just start in on me now."

"Firstly, of course I wouldn't discuss something so personal in such a public place," Hiccup retorted, freckled cheeks turning strawberry red. "Secondly, why would I *'start in on you'*? You haven't done anything wrong have you?"

"It depends on what you think *'wrong'* is, I guess." Jack was definitely blushing and obviously avoiding eye contact. For a second, Hiccup was confused. Then, as it dawned, he was an all new sort of flabbergasted.

"You meanâ€¦ youâ€¦?"

"OY SHOWPONY!" Aster's screech sounded from behind them

Both jumped two feet in the air, faces burning hotter than a frying

pan, and spun around.

"What are you doing?" Aster demanded as he neared them.

"Going to Hiccup's. I have homework," Jack replied as he cringed.

"Screw homework!" Aster tugged his pony-tail in aggravation. "We have the concert tomorrow, wait until after that before you start caring about grades. We need to practice."

"It's four 'o' clock and I still need to shower!" Jack protested. Since the last time, he usually only picked up the supplies and left to shower either at home or at Hiccup's.

"Whatever. We need to go by your house to get to the station anyway. We'll swing by for you to shower. We're not going to stop until we've done the whole concert list twice."

"TWICE?"

"What about your voice, Aster? Won't you be overusing it?" Hiccup interrupted quickly, hoping to calm Jack's rapidly rising anger and to make Aster see sense. "And you could cramp up."

"I won't be using it until the second set," Aster explained. "and that's why we do warm-ups, anklebiter."

"He hasn't been singing at all unless he wasn't sure about how it would sound," Jack grumbled.

"I still dance and put in as much practice as you," snapped Aster irritably. "c'mon, ya still havta teach the rest to do that wall running bit."

"Parkour. That's the only reason I'm still in the band," Jack muttered to Hiccup lowly. He kissed the auburnette's lips lightly and shrugged. "We'll have to talk tomorrow, huh? I'm sorry."

"It's no problem. Just do your best and get a good night's sleep. Tomorrow you're going to be a nervous wreck."

Jack just laughed and jogged after the scowling Aster.

Hiccup frowned as they disappeared. His unfinished question still seemed to hang heavily on his lips. His frown disappeared as his blush renewed itself as the thought resurfaced. He didn't know if he should be angry or pleased at Jack's unnerving confession. He could be wrong, however. Jack had never actually said it and he had never finished asking his question. He still thought it was pretty likely, based on what Anna and Cristoff told him.

~o~

"Jay!"

He stopped walking and turned towards her excited voice.

"Hey, Astrid." Jamie hadn't seen her very often since their school started on Monday, they had different schedules and free periods,

after school and Lacrosse training in some days, Astrid had to rush home to help her dad manage the convenience store, but they still met up to hang out and make sure he did his homework correctly.

Not to mention her phone calls that lasted hours.

"Guess what Hale gave me?" Astrid grinned excitedly, beaming widely.

"What? Cake?" He waited until she was beside him before continuing towards his house.

"No!" She punched his shoulder and thrust paper in his face. "These! Look at them!" "Easy with the punches, jeez." Jamie grabbed one of the slips of paper from her hand and stared. "Wow! How did you get these? How did you get such good seats?" he exclaimed, eyes going wide in shock.

"Hale! His roommate is a lead dancer and the lead singer, and his boyfriend is one of the new choreographer. So they'll have new moves, too! Awesome, huh? I can't wait for tomorrow! He said he wanted to meet you," Astrid told him, taking back the tickets and putting them safely in her wallet.

Jamie frowned. "He has already."

"What?"

"Haley Haddock, right? Jack smashed his nose against his forehead. Doesn't he remember me?" Jamie pouted. Surely he made a little bit of an impression, right?

"Ohâ€ he said your name sounded familiar, but I never told him your last name," Astrid was quick to reassure him. "I mentioned you as Jay, not exactly your given name." She suppressed a smile at his pout.

"That would be why, then. He knows my name better. But I guess we only met once, the first and last time I saw him was at the park he smashed into Jack." Jamie frowned darkly, thinking about Jack.

"What's wrong?"

"I've been hearing some ugly rumors about Jack, he graduated from our middle school after all. My friend Monty told me he heard a bunch of high schoolers apparently didn't like a their captain being younger than them, so their probably the senior team members, and now that he's gay, a lot of them are getting pissy. Some guys on my soccer team who knew Jack and hang out with high schoolers a lot have been getting worried. They say that he's been getting beat on and stuff. Some say there's rumors going around about a bashing they're going to give him before the concert so he can't play."

"Oh my god! We have to call him."

"Nah." Jamie shook his head. "If I know, he knows. I know Jack; he refuses to back down from something he believes in. He has to show whoever he's up against that he won't back down, even if it means getting beat the snot out of. He won't go looking for it, but he

won't hide from it, either," he told her, becoming more agitated at the thought. He knew he was right about this.

"Should we tell Haley, then? I don't think Jack told him. He would be more anxious."

"You're right, he probably didn't tell Haley." Jamie chewed his bottom lip. Inside him a war was raging; either tell the auburnette to make sure someone was looking out for Jack, or not tell and do as Jack would have told him to do. He grinned suddenly. Jack wasn't his assisting their soccer team anymore, busy with managing his own sports team at High school, so he couldn't make him run around the soccer field anymore.

And running in the middle of a snow day for 5 hours straight hadn't been fun. Payback time.

"Jamie?"

"We tell Haley. Jack will be so nervous about the concert he won't be watching his back properly. Tonight is going to be the most dangerous for him, so I think we should tell Haley now," Jamie decided, grinning at Astrid, who grinned back.

"Great! Thank goodness, Jamie, I've been so worried. I'm glad we're going to help," the blond enthused eagerly.

Jamie nodded and looked at Astrid's happily flushed face.

She was pretty. Maybe not like Emma, but, then, nobody was or would be. Emma would always be special, but Astrid was a good friend and a fun person to yell with. She could make him laugh and want to pull out his hair, or hers, at the same time. Life was exciting and almost dangerous with her. He laid his arm over her shoulders and tugged her up against him. Her smile got wider and he liked the way her eyes sparkled. They weren't that soul-twisting browns he loved, but her eyes did make him feel pretty good about himself when they smiled all special-like at him.

~o~

"How's school been, Emma?" Eret asked politely as they sat down at her desk.

She chuckles lightly. "Funny, thought I should've asked that... But, it's okay." Emma shrugged and sharpened her pencil carefully. Jamie and she used to have a contest on how long they could make their pencil shavings before they broke.

It fell suddenly to her desktop and she stared at it for a second.

"That wasn't very long at all," she sighed. She swept it into her wastebasket and eyed her pencil. It would've been stupid to keep trying as her pencil was sufficiently sharp. If not more so.

"I haven't sharpened a pencil in a long time," Eret spoke up, smiling.

"It's not very efficient, I know, but these pencils are cheaper than

good mechanical pencils or cheap pens that needs to be replace regularly and every penny counts in my family. Especially seeing as they're paying for the yearly, almost monthly, repairs of Jack's team uniform. Hopefully, this is the last time he'll be growing any taller or wider."

Eret chuckled. "Well, at least you're helping out with your tutoring job. I'm sure even when report comes in positive, the sessions won't stop either," he pointed out. "my folks would like to make sure I don't revert them back to 'F's'."

Emma felt her chest tightened at the very thought.

"I'm glad. What could I do without you?" She whispered looking up at him. Eret's eyes widened in surprise. "You've helped me so much these past three weeks. I don't know how I'd cope without you after going to school with Jamie every day."

"Just because I'm your pupil doesn't mean I'm not your friend. I might've come here less if ever these sessions stops, but I would've come as often as I can to see you." He placed a hand over her and she gave him a shaky smile.

"You're right. I'm just soâ€¦weak, now. I can't get a grip on myself anymore." She pressed a small hand to her forehead. "I feel like everything I've ever bottled up inside me is just going to come bursting out against my will. I have to keep pushing it inside or everyone will see. I-I can't let anyone see what's inside me. Not even Jack, he's already dealing with a lot of crap these days. I opened up for Jamie and look what happened!"

"That's his fault for not trusting you," Eret told her gently.

"No." Emma shook her head. "I never gave him a reason for trusting me. I was secretive and lied to him, even though I'd promised never to lie. I neverâ€¦ I never put the effort into our relationship that he did. I just kept thinking he'd always be there, he'd never doubt me. I was a fool, of course." Her hand dropped back to her desk. "We should start homework now."

"Y-yeah, if you feel up to it,"

Emma smiled up at him for his concern. "I'll be fine. Keep my mind busy with teaching helps and being around you eases my mind."

Eret blushed and smiled back. "I don't know who's suppose to say '\_Thank you\_' now," he murmured. He lifted his hand away from hers and leaned over towards his backpack. It looked a lot like her brother'sâ€¦only more taken care of and newer. More expensive.

"I was going to ask you something," Emma remembered. She unzipped her beat-up backpack and searched around for her science book. "Here, for you." She pulled a slip of paper out of the book and handed it to him. "You might be busy with your soccer tomorrow, but I thought I'd invite you anyway. My brother is the new dancer and he choreographed some new moves for the Easter Manuevers. He got me some very good tickets and a backstage pass that we can share. What do you say, want to go?"

"Sure. I've never been to a concert before." He read the small slip

thoroughly. "I'm not into boy bands either, not even girl bands and cheerleading portions make me pukeâ€| but a lot of my classmates talk highly of this band. I guess I could give them a try."

"They're not so bad." Emma smiled gently. "With the dance, I mean. They aren't flirtatious, provocative or seductive. Their moves are based on some martial arts techniques and hand-to-hand combat combos, my brother says."

"That sounds way cooler." They smiled again and then turned back to the books.

~o~

"So, how was it?" Dimitri asked.

Jim blinked up at him. "I'm still rather shocked. I mean, Scroop stopped bugging me for weeks until he finally decided it was too awkward and transferred out, but it's a bit weird running into his fellow dicks and not get beaten up."

"The sure as hell shouldn't even lay a finger, or they'll have crap to deal with once I get my hands on them." Dimitri grunted.

Jim rolled his eyes. "Yeah, but that'll only add up to the crap you have to deal with after trespassing a school you don't even go to... Or even manages your homeschool services."

"Look who's talking about trespassing, didn't you just get called on last week for skateboarding in a restricted construction site?"

"Oh shut up,"

Dimitri chuckled. "Want to go to that cafe again?"

"Maybeâ€| that whipped cream wasn't very good, though," Jim mused. "I'd eat mom's work any day."

"Jimmy!" Both boys turned as a familiar-looking (well, to Jim) boy ran towards him. He stopped and gasped for air. "I-I've been m-meaning to talk to you for awhile." He managed to say.

"Ben, for the last time, it's Jim okay?" The pony-tailed brunette corrected. "What's up, man?"

Ben blushed and stared down at his feet. "Youâ€|you never said anything to meâ€| about what I told you a few weeks back. I thoughtâ€| maybe you were still thinking about it, but... I was wonderingâ€| could youâ€| meet me tomorrow? I meanâ€| not like a dateâ€| or maybe like one, even when really dating you is close to impossible, I'd like a shot," he mumbled and stammered.

"Oh, ermâ€|" Jim looked up at Dimitri filled with confusion. Dimitri's face was strangely blank. Jim frowned, but turned back to the four-eyed boy. "I guess it wouldn't be too bad. You're right to say it would be pretty hard to date me." \_You have no idea\_. "Meeting you tomorrow sounds all right."

"Really?" His face shined in happiness. "Can we meet in the park? A guy works at a desserts truck regularly there. We could meet at about



twelve or so," he suggested eagerly.

"All right."

"Okay!" He smiled brightly, pushing his glasses up. "I can't wait to tell Morph, he'll be so surprised! Tomorrow, Jimmy!" he ran off, waving.

"It's JIM!" He sighed, scratching his cheek. "That was strange. Tomorrow's going to be strange." Jim shook his head. He turned to look at Dimitri to hear his opinion, but blinked at the empty space beside him instead. He looked around quickly and just barely caught Dimitri's tall form turning around the entrance gate.

Jim hoped on his board and quickly raced after him. He grabbed Dimitri's elbow just moments later, breathing hard. "Wh-what are you doing?" he wheezed.

"What am I doing?" Dimitri's voice was low and strained.

Jim blinked again with surprise. "Why'd you run off like that?" He clarified slowly.

"You just made a date with a guy while I was standing right next to you."

If Jim had thought it possible, he would've sworn Dimitri was snarling. "That wasn't really a date. I felt a little bad because I forgot to respond to his confession. I want to tell him the truth, Dimitri." his eyes narrowed. "Do you really think so little of me?" His own voice was low this time and darker.

"What was I supposed to think? Some random guy just ran up to you and then you plan a date with him tomorrow without even asking me first! You even forgot to tell him you have a boyfriend!" Dimitri's fingers were burning against the slips of paper in his pocket.

"You didn't exactly give me a chance! I turned towards you and you didn't say a word. You didn't even look at me. Not to mention the fact, he isn't just some random guy either, he helped me pull my grades up last semester and mom was pleased. I didn't want to embarrass him in front of the whole school." Jim retorted coldly. "That wouldn't be returning the favor at all."

"Or you didn't want him to tell your mom about you."

The softly spoken words lingered on the air between them.

"Ben's not like that, and are you threatening to do just that over such a little thing? We've only been dating for less than a month, and you throw me this territorial shit?" Jim frowned, his voice stiff. His hand dropped from Dimitri's arm. "Whatever, I need to go home." He turned and began walking away.

"Jim!"

"Go screw yourself," Jim said softly. He continued to walk away. \_Follow me, Dimitri, please! Say you're sorry and follow me!\_

Jim felt his lips quiver when Dimitri did not do as his mind begged.

He tightened his mouth, lips thinning into a firm line.

~o~

"Soâ€¦ I was thinking about wearing that new dress mom got me just a week ago. You know, that black one? For special occasions? But then I thought, that's so not me. I'm one who usually go for earthy colorsâ€¦ green and brown, you know? I was thinking that olive cocktail dress would be more suitable this time. With the white cardigan and that amethyst necklace I got from grandmotherâ€¦" Anna chattered away while Elsa counted the money as Anna finished sweeping the shop floor.

"Anna, how much do you think this guy likes you?"

"Uhm... I'd say about a lot? He does pick me up in school regularly. I'm not even sure if he has to skip his classes to do so or not..."

"And do you think he'd judge you for whatever you wear?"

"Well, no, but he does get awkward a lot..."

"Then I suggest you go for something a bit less... revealing, you know? I'm sure it would make mom and dad happy too."

Anna chuckled. "I love you, Elsa. You make decisions so much easier," she exclaimed dramatically.

"I'm sure you would've come to same conclusions once you stopped chattering and just thought. My advice stems from your own habits," Elsa told her with a small shrug, still smiling.

"But you just cut through the red tape and hit the main plot."

"Did that make any sense to you?"

"In my head." They shared a laugh again. "What I meant was, you just see through my chatter and figure out what I'd eventually figure out myself with less fuss. You done counting?"

"Yup. You done sweeping?" Elsa asked as Anna put up the broom and emptied the dustpan into the trash.

"Yeah, I just need to throw this out real fast. You want to rearrange to clothes that the customers misplaced?"

"Sure, we can go out for a walk later. Maybe we go for a walk to settle your nerves before the date."

After the closing was complete, the two girls began to journey towards the downtown area of Burgess. It was still pretty early in the evening, a few businessmen were wandering the streets, but traffic, human and vehicle, was mostly nonexistent.

"So, how fancy is this place we're talking about?" Elsa asked, returning their conversation back to the topic from which the fashion discussion had stemmed.

"Oh, like, the menus don't have prices on them so the newbies don't

throw a fit," Anna explained.

"Wow." Elsa whistled. "Maybe black is better to go with."

"But then it wouldn't be me I'm sure everyone else will be wearing black." Anna's eyes sparkled.

"So, you and Cristoff are definitely serious?"

"I think that's what tonight is for. He's so cute. It's like asking me to be his official girlfriend is as important and nerve-wracking as asking me to be his wife." Anna giggled behind her hand. "What about you and Aster?"

"It's weird hearing him called that after calling him jerkface five times a day." Elsa frowned.

Anna laughed. "Don't change the subject, 'fess up! What's going on?" she nudged her sister with her elbow.

"Wellâ€¦" Elsa dragged out dramatically barely keeping back a smile.

"ELSA!" Anna shrieked, grabbing her arm and shaking her vigorously.

"All right, all right, nothing's really been going on. He gave me an awesome backstage pass-

"He gave one to Cris," Anna put in quickly.

"No, I mean, during the performance kind of backstage pass. I can scream from the stage instead of from the crowd."

"OH WOW! Cristoff and I get to go backstage after the show, not during."

"Yaaaah... Only Haley and a few others get to. Aster said most the other people back there will be girlfriends and his younger brother will be back there. And a friendâ€¦"

"Elsaâ€¦ what are you going to do?" Anna's voice was quiet.

Elsa didn't bother asking what she meant. She knew exactly what Anna was talking aboutâ€¦ or more specifically who.

"Jack will have warned him by now I'll be back there with him. Either we'll politely stay out of each other's way or I apologize immediately and hope he gives me a good punch in the jaw."

"Haley doesn't hit people," Anna hesitantly told her as they neared the mall.

"I know." Elsa sighed and pushed open the door. "Jack already told me. But here's to hoping!" She grinned a wide fake grin and followed her sister in.

~o~

Hiccup was busily filling his paper with dizzily confusing equations

that seemed to make sense to him when the bell rang. He waited a moment, but when he heard a loud crash and Cristoff curse loudly, the auburnette got up and headed towards the foyer. Cristoff stuck his head out of his room just as Hiccup reached for the knob.

"You got it?"

Hiccup raised an eyebrow and looked pointedly down at his hand.

"Right. Um, sorry. I wasâ€¦ cleaningâ€¦" Cristoff blushed.

Hiccup rolled his eyes at Cristoff's obvious lie. "Yeah, and you don't have a stuff reindeer called Sphen that you talk for." He said snarkily. The blond has been throwing clothes around looking for the perfect outfit to take Anna out on a date that night at eight.

"I don't talk for him!" Cristoff blushed furiously as he retreated back into his room with a bang. Then it opened just as it closed. "And his name is Sven!"

Hiccup turned the door knob as Cristoff quickly disappeared into his room again.

"HEY!" Two very loud voices bellowed when the door swung open.

Hiccup's eyes widened seeing Astrid and Jamie leaning on each other at his front door and panting.

"Uhh Jamie? Astrid too... what's wrong?" he asked, filling with confusion at their red, sweaty faces.

"Mr. I-believe-in-anything here decided a race would be a fun way to settle a bet whether big foots exists or not," Astrid explained flipping back her ponytail.

"Whatever. You wanted to, too. Said you could beat me even if you had to hop here like the Easter bunny. But I won even though you were running at full speed," Jamie snapped back. He stuck his tongue out at her.

She snarled back.

"Ohâ€¦" Hiccup had nothing better to respond to that. "would you like some drink of water?" he offered, plainly still confused.

"Oh, nah. We're going back to my house for yaknog and cake, so we're cool," Astrid explained happily. "Oh, remind me sometime to make you some?"

Hiccup blinked as he saw Jamie's warning shake of a head behind her. "Uh... I'll try to make a note of that..." he said. "Soâ€¦ uhâ€¦ does E-"

"No." The expression on Jamie's face made Hiccup quickly swallow his question.

"I seeâ€¦ I think. Did you two need something?" he inquired uncomfortably.

"Oh, right, duh! We came to warn you!" Jamie slapped his head.

Hiccup felt his eyebrow rise of its own volition. "Really." His question didn't come out right. It sounded more like a statementâ€| that implied he wasn't very impressed.

Astrid rolled her eyes. "He did it wrong. Jack is in a pretty bad situation right now, as you know, of course. He's been getting hazed at school."

Hiccup's eyes darkened at Astrid's words. "Yes, I do know."

"Well, Jamie heard some rumors from his soccer buddies. Apparently, some of the older team players on Jack's varsity have planned to lay in on him before the concert tomorrow,"

"You make it sound like you don't believe it when coming here was your idea." Jamie pouted.

"He's right, it was my idea, because I do believe him. Guys can be stupid, ya know? I don't know if they'll actually do it, but Jamie said Jack wouldn't tell anyone because that's the kind of guy he is and I agreed with him. I wanted to make sure someone knew so in case they do plan on it, someone will be there when it happens." Her eyes were dead serious.

As were Hiccup's. "Thank you. Jamie was right again. He didn't tell me about those rumors. If he knows about them, anyway, which I don't doubt. I know his same year players are fiercely loyal to him and would have warned him. I'll go to the studio where they have band practice withâ€| my cell phone, I guess, and keep an eye out." The auburnette sighed. "I wish I could get in to ask the others to help, but they'll be too busy and it most likely will be locked."

"What about Cristoff?" Astrid asked, frowning.

"He's going on his first date with Anna tonight," Hiccup answered with a slight shake of his head.

"I thought she was crazy about you," Jamie replied, blinking.

"I wasn't good for her. We came to an understanding," Hiccup said with a slight smile.

"Wellâ€| you're gay."

"Sharp, aren't you?" Astrid snapped sarcastically. He stuck out his tongue again. "Should we come with you?" she offered anxiously, looking back towards Hiccup.

"No, they won't be out until late. It won't be safe for kids under eighteen. I'm a college student, so I'll get away with it, and Jack is in the band, but you guys will be out of luck. Hopefully they won't show. If they do, I'll be there to warn him and the band will be there."

"I guess you're right. When are you going to head over? We'll at least go with you to the train station," Astrid suggested.

"No, I won't head out until the practice is almost over. They won't try anything until then."

"All right!" She trailed off.

"I don't know!" Jamie said slowly. His eyes were nervous. "I don't feel right."

"I feel unsettled, too. However, I cannot just wait outside the building for four hours or more. They'll figure out who I am and hurt me instead. He's safe as long as he's in practice, and the last thing we need is him freaking over someone hurting me." Hiccup assured him. "I know how much you look up to Jack, but there's only so much I can do to help without real evidence or more friends."

"All right. Thanks. For like, believing us," Jamie muttered, blushing a bit. Seeing Hiccup's calm smile and his easy trust made it easy for Jamie to see why Jack liked Hiccup so much.

"If it's about Jack, I believe first, suspect later." His smile was dry as he spoke.

Jamie grinned, liking Hiccup even more.

"Have a good night, Hale, and be careful!" Astrid warned as the two walked away. Hiccup nodded silently and closed the door.

~o~

Jack sighed as he walked out of the building. The night was cool right next to the bay and the warehouse the Easter Manuevers rented was hot after three hours of practice. He'd have to call Hiccup and tell him he'd be a lot later than planned. Some amps weren't compatible to the stereos, and some headsets hadn't worked right and they had to spend awhile fixing them before they could start.

Instead of practice starting at four, it had starting at five. They were still a song or two from finishing the first set, but they had needed the rest. They were all starving and hotter than hell. Night was about to fall, Jack went running off to buy some dinner. He quickly jogged towards the nearby pizza place to buy a slice and run back.

Run back he did indeed do. The pizza place had been closed due to construction and he had to run around looking for another cheap eating hole. It had taken fifteen out of thirty to find one and another ten to order in the packed deli. He was eating as he ran, meatball sauce running down his chin and fingers. He stopped to breathe and swallow as the warehouse entered his vision. He stared down at the pavement, bracing one hand on his knee as he wheezed. With sudden annoyance, he realized how dark everything was.

"Damn it. They haven't replaced the light bulb yet?" Jack cursed taking another bite of meatball sub and standing up. He began to walk again as he cast a glare at the still broken streetlamp above him.

"So where's your faggot boyfriend, Overland?"

Jack turned with wide eyes, choking slightly on mozzarella and beef. He had forgotten all about his teammates warnings. \_Damn. I better run before I'm even later for practice.\_ He moved to toss his sandwich into a nearby dumpster and caught another body move forward. A quick glance around showed about five other guys in a loose circle around him. \_Hmmâ€| one more than the usual.\_

"He's obviously not here. Unless he's hidingâ€|that doesn't seem likely, though. He'd be backed by sirens now if he saw you guys. Doesn't like the shiners I bring home." Jack shrugged as if it didn't matter and threw his sub away. He suddenly grinned. "That's great!"

"What?" They all took a step back and looked around as if Jack had just realized his boyfriend had been hiding and was bringing police. They looked back at the hysterically laughing Jack when they realized no police were driving up.

"My-my s-sandwich!" Jack choked past his laughter, clutching at his stomach.

"What?"

"Screw it. Let's just get this over with," growled the sixth person to join the little cadre.

Jack gradually stopped laughing, wiping at his eyes, and looked around him again. Six against one sucked pretty bad, and he couldn't find a way to get an advantage. Even flight wasn't an option. He sighed mentally and got into a low crouch, fists held in front of him. \_Might as well try my best. \_

~o~

"Where is that bloody showpony!" Aster shrieked. "I gave him thirty minutes to go get a slice of pizza and he still takes an hour."

every single dancer were back in the studio after the break. Except Jack. Their choreographer.

This tech support, Guy, held his hands up. "Calm down, Aster."

"Maybe we should go look for him. It's dark out there and we're in a pretty lousy district," suggested a back up dancer, Jonathan.

Aster chewed his lip. "You're right. We better hurry. He's has been gone too long," he agreed. \_He likes to try my patience, but not by being thirty minutes late to a rehearsal! Especially when he's more nervous than I am about tomorrow!\_

The large door slid open just as everyone had jolted up to their resting positions.

"Oh my god! Jack!" Aster rushed ahead of the rest of the equally distraught members.

"Sorry I'm late. I didn't really need that showpony comment, though.

You gotta stop calling me that. Kept falling down, see? It's not my fault when gravity messes with me." Jack grinned. He winced as he pulled the cut on his lip. He leaned against the doorjamb and slid down to his knees. Blood was flowing from somewhere under his hair and one eye was shut, either from blood or bruises or both, Aster didn't know.

"Gravity didn't bloody screw you, Jack!" Aster snapped. "Strew. Anyone, quick, call an ambulance."

"Kuzco already is." Jonathan and Guy both knelt next to Aster and gently helped lift Jack up off his knees.

"Ow," Jack hissed between his teeth. "I think they broke a rib or two. They didn't mess with my hands, though. And my arms are good, too, just scratched some. I didn't sprain a leg either."

"THEY?" Aster shrieked.

"There goes an ear, too," Jack muttered.

"HOW MANY?"

"Eh— six— though twelve appeared for a second. They got me in the nards once."

All the guys winced.

"You're joking." Aster's flat voice was more dangerous than his loud one.

"Nope." Jack shook his head and winced again.

"Why aren't you more surprised?" That voice got flatter.

"Well, I've been getting crap at school. I heard a rumor, but I forgot. I was in hurry 'cuz I thought I'd be late. I hadn't expected the pizza place to be closed." He suddenly laughed and quickly stopped. He had to press his fingers against his lips to keep from smiling and to hold the painful laughter in.

"What's so damn funny?" Guy raised a brow.

"I was eating a meatball sandwich." Jack quickly had to contain himself when his probably-broken nose almost snorted.

"Damn it, showpony." Aster sighed. The rest of the guys tried their best not to smile. "Rack off. You're such a loser."

"Yeah— I figured that one out after the fourth guy joined in." Siren wails sounded outside. Jack sighed, pinching the bridge of his nose as the sluggish flow quickened. "Hic's gonna kill me."

Jonathan made a look. "Uhhh and this is somehow more scary than six... twelve guys... jumping on him?"

"Dude, if Mavis got her hands on any guy who screwed you," Guy patted his back. "wouldn't that be scarier?"

Jonathan thought about it. "Point taken."



~o~

Hiccup burst into the room with wild panicking eyes. He had gotten the call from Aster while he was cleaning dinner dishes, anxiously watching the clock and hoping to hear from Jack during the band's dinner break. He'd been getting more and more worried as time passed, thinking they'd surely stopped to eat, when Aster had called, barely restrained a fury like Hiccup had ever seen or heard from the usually cool, collected young man. Hiccup stared across the white-tiled, white-walled room to where Jack was sitting up, surrounded by his family and covered in miscellaneous scratches, bruises, and bandages.

Emma was perched on the edge of the bed next to him, but jumped p when Hiccup stumbled in, freckled face paling, making the freckles more obvious. Thiana had been crying, a handkerchief to her face, with her husband's arms around her shoulder.

"Jack!" Hiccup exclaimed breathlessly. He darted across the room and kneeled on the edge of the bed, taking stock of all the bandages and the readings on all the machines.

"I'm okay, see? All patched up!" Jack grinned and winced. "I need to stop smiling!"

"Your face!" Hiccup whispered, reaching up to touch Jack's temple.

"My face? Oh, you mean this?" Jack basically gestured to everywhere that had bruises... which was everywhere. "aww come on Hiccy, don't tell me you only like me for my looks..." he teased lightly.

Hiccup was still looking at it like it had taken his favorite toy away.

Jack poked his boyfriend's cheek. "Hic? Come on... I don't look too bad..."

"YOU LOOK LIKE HORRIBLE!" Hiccup jumped as Thiana's voice screeched behind him. He quickly moved away, gazing at Jack's bandaid covered face.

"Mom, I'm fine. Just a broken nose," The white-haired teen whined.

"It looks like a broken head, too." Emma joked weakly.

"And broken ribs, what the hell happened, son?" North demanded.

The family had arrived just minutes before Hiccup had burst through the door and hadn't yet asked him.

"Some idiots jumped me, that's all. I wasn't in a very good place," Jack explained.

"It's because of me."

"No, Hic-" Jack quickly protested.

Hiccup shook his head. "Jamie came to warn me today about the rumors he heard from some soccer players. I was going to go meet up with you when practice ended. I had no idea you'd be outside at nine'o'clock at night." His words were clipped and tight.

Jack frowned. "I wanted to eat some dinner. The sun was out when I left, but the pizza place was closed. Everywhere was packed," he mumbled, tracing shapes on the blanket over his legs.

Thiana groaned. "You should have gone back to get someone!" Hiccup and Thiana snapped together. Their eyes met briefly and then returned to Jack.

"I wasn't thinking about it. I forgot!"

"Look what happened because you forgot!" Hiccup snapped. "Your nose is broken, your ribs are broken, you almost had a concussion, and you're covered in bruises. Aster told me you were even kicked in your privates." North winced. "You can't open your right eye."

"Yeahâ€¦ well, I won't do it again," Jack retorted defensively.

"That doesn't count, Jackson." Hiccup suddenly deflated. "I think I'm going to break up with you again."

"WHAT!" Everyone but North yelled. Thiana kicked her husband's shin.

"What? It's up to them. Boy is right. It was basically because Jack's dating him."

"It could be anybody, not only Haley!" Emma snapped.

"But it is me this time. I don't want some high school bullies beating you around, Jack. It's stupid. Not only is the band going to suffer with you, but so your ability to ski, snowboard, and all things considered."

"I'm quitting the team, actually," Jack replied with a shrug.

"WHAT?" Everyone but Emma yelled.

"You can't be serious!" Hiccup yelled.

"Your scholarship, Jackson!"

"Jack, you can't just quit."

"I figured you say that." Emma sighed.

"I don't like it, but Hic's right. I made a commitment to the band. High school bullies are a stupid reason to mess with that. I like being in the band, anyway. Don't tell Aster," Jack pleaded with a weak grin.

"So you'll jeopardize your future?" Hiccup asked blankly.

Jack shrugged. "I'm sure there's other scholarships. I don't want to

be a professional ball player. If I make enough money for a camera, I could do thatâ€¦ I'm pretty good at capturing angles... I can take shots of yearbook pictures for a living."

"JACK! I won't allow you to just throw away your future. I like Haley very much, but we don't have money to help you!" North exclaimed.

"I'll make money somehow."

"JACKSON!"

"Hiccup."

"This is not funny."

"Nope. Meatball sandwiches are, though." Jack snickered.

"What?" Emma asked incredulously.

"Never mind. Jack, I'm solving your problem for you if you can't be serious."

"We already tried it that way, Hic. I'll still be gay even if you do dump me," Jack snapped.

"But you won't have a boyfriend."

"I kiss every single guy on my team," Jack threatened, causing North to groan this time.

"You w-would not," Hiccup stuttered.

"I would."

A staring contest ensued while Emma struggled to keep in laughter. North rubbed his forehead tiredly while Thiana glanced from one boy to the other, clearly torn.

"Fine!" Everyone looked toward North. "Fine. Nevermind scholarship or College. Do what you want. You better make it worth it, Haley."

"How, by bearing you many sons?" Emma finally gave into laughter.

Hiccup began to rub his forehead, too, as Jack and Thiana joined her.

"I'm really sorry. Your son is a dork," Hiccup apologized profusely.

"We know," Thiana assured him, her mouth still twitching.

"You can't bear sons, but come up with something, okay?" North pleaded. The other three more cheerful people in the room began laughing again while North and Hiccup shared equally strained glances.

"I'll think really hard," Hiccup promised.

"Nowâ€¦what about meatball sandwiches?" North sighed turning back to his son.

**\*\*Author's Notes: meatBALLs... Enough said, I will not explain further cause it's crude. Unless you want me to explain via PM. Leave reviews please.\*\***

#### 14. My Guardian Beginnings

**\*\*Author's Notes: Not gonna give flimsy excuses. Just gonna apologize for taking so long with this update. Just hoping against hope I still have readers.\*\***

**\*\*Disclaimer: I own nothing\*\***

**\*\*My Guardian\*\***

**\*\*Chapter Eleven\*\***

**\*\*My Guardian Beginnings\*\***

Dimitri gripped the thin rectangles of paper in his hand tightly. It was barely eight 'o' clock in the morning, but he was already getting ready to leave. His eyes stared down at his clenched fingers with a dark frown.

"I'm so stupid." He whispered to himself. "Why'd I act like that? I acted like a child, a stupid, jealous child." he closed his eyes and breathed deeply. "I'm sureâ€¦ I'm sure if I explain, Jim will understand. He's a really good personâ€¦"

\_Too good for you. A teenage boy too ashamed of himself to tell the truth. He's not afraid of himself, he's not afraid of who he is or who he loves. He's not trying to run away because he's too scared of letting other people know what he can barely tell himself. Being gay is hardâ€¦ harder than it should be,\_ Dimitri decided with a sigh.

He forgot that Jim hasn't told his mom yet. But at least she was the only one. His closest friends knew, even his local bullies.

"DIMITRI! WHERE ARE YOU GOING?! DON'T FORGET YOU GOT HOMESCHOOL LATER!"

Dimitri jumped up and winced as his mother's voice screamed through his door. "Sorry! I was thinking and forgot to stop."

"What?"

"Never mind." Dimitri stuffed the tickets down the front pocket. He ran towards the front door, sliding into the kitchen to snatch cold Pop-Tarts and continue towards the door.

"If you forget about your first session, you're grounded and you won't see your girlfriend for a month!"

Dimitri winced again. \_Girlfriendâ€| rightâ€|\_

The door slammed shut behind him.

\*\*3HJHJHJHJ3\*\*

Jim waved at the guy running towards him.

"I'm so sorry! I had clean up duty! Wellâ€| actually, my sister did, but she said she had to get to cheerleading practice early and begged me to take her place. I couldn't say 'no'." Ben smiled sheepishly.

Jim vaguely remembered incidents where even their fellow classmates continually begged a stammering nerd to do their work or help them with assignments. He must've been the stammering nerd in those foggy recollections.

"Helping people out is a good thing to do, Ben, I'm still grateful when you helped me but too much of a good thing is, well, too much."

He blushed and shifted under his gaze. "I-I kn-know that. B-Butâ€| they ask for help and they j-just plead with m-me and it seems so mean to say '\_no\_', " he stammered.

Jim patted his shoulder gently and Ben smiled up at him through his blush.

"It's all right, I guess. I suggest, however, you start learning how to say '\_no'.\_ Like, if they get upset when you do, whatever right? It's their work... So, to the park?" Jim reminded him.

"Yes! I'm afraid we can't have a very long time together because I do need to help my dad with washing the family car, we'll have time to walk to the park and get something from that dessert cart guy. Is that okay?" he asked anxiously, eyes seen as wider and magnified by large-framed glasses.

"Yeah sure, I'm not too picky."

They silently walked side by side. It was barely past noon, bright and sunny, and Jim couldn't wait for a crepe in the park. He was really hungry and it would taste delicious after sharing the lunch his mom made them back at the diner.

"Umâ€| Jimmy?"

Jim turned towards Ben with a vague smile. "Uh huh?"

"Thatâ€| that guy... the one from yesterdayâ€| who is he?" Ben asked. "He looks cool and kinda handsome. I wondered how you knew him, cause I haven't seen him in school." he mumbled, shuffled awkwardly and blushing at his boldness.

"His name is Dimitri Sudayev." Jim's voice was oddly flat and cold. "We had been dating, but he jumped to conclusions."

"D-d-d-d-dating?" Ben squeaked.

"Oh, yeah." Jim blinked and looked down at Ben again. "Is there a problem?"

"Oh, um, no! I really don't have an opinion about that. I mean, I don't like to be hateful towards someone I don't know. What if it hurts their feelings if I say something mean about them?" Jim felt his lips tug upwards. "I-I was just surprised. I neverâ€¦ I never realized you could be dating someoneâ€¦ you usually kept to yourself... even if we were friends you rather go off alone." Ben was still blushing vividly and staring down at his shoes.

Jim frowned a bit, feeling a bit guilty. He didn't really consider his relationship with Ben as anything but professional even after the tutorial sessions. But in his way, Ben always stuck up for him. So maybe it wouldn't hurt to afford being friendlier.

"I didn't want to discuss it at school where anybody could overhear and then you would be humiliated. I know how hard it was for you to admit your feelings to me," The skaterboy explained. "Oops, I didn't mean that in a way that I pitied you. It came out wrong, sorry... But the other reason is... Well, I didn't think it was the school's business to know whether I dated or not."

"Ohâ€¦ you're so thoughtful, Jimmy." Ben pressed his knuckles against his lips. "Ifâ€¦ If you don't mind my askingâ€¦ why are you here with me nowâ€¦ if you have a boyfriend already?"

"Well, he's not really my boyfriend... At least we haven't established it. Just..." Jim rubbed the back of his head. "I'm sorry that I completely forgot your confession and felt like it was the least I could do. You went out of your way to confess and I didn't mean to hurt your feelings. I wanted to make it up to you and to tell you the truth about me."

"Ohâ€¦" \_He just feels sorry for me.\_ Ben sighed and his hand fell back down. "You saidâ€¦ you had been dating, what does that meanâ€¦ if you don't mind me asking, I mean!" Ben squeaked at the end. He glanced up to see if he had offended him and gasped at the cold anger in his eyes.

"When you came up to me yesterday, the dimwit made an accusation that pissed me off. He saw I was upset about it but didn't even bother to apologize, that dick, and I haven't spoken to him since," Jim stated coldly.

"Was it because of me?" Ben exclaimed horrified. "I couldn't stand it if you and that good-looking guy broke up because of stupid me!"

"You aren't stupid!" Jim protested. "I'm the one who needed tutoring, remember?"

"Everyone says soâ€¦ I hear them say it. How stupid I am for doing their chores and homework, for being unable to stand up in class without crying and dork off at tests because I panic half-way through." His voice was small as he spoke. "I know I'm stupid. No wonder you only feel sorry for me. I should've known a cool, cute boy like you would already have somebody."

"You shouldn't say things like that!"

Ben stopped and turned to see Jim standing outraged just a few inches behind him.

"They're true, aren't they?"

"No way! You're just too kind and too scared! You just need to realize that you are smart and can say '\_no\_'. You just need to be stronger, I guess." Jim frowned and thought about it.

"Stronger? How will strength help me?" Ben asked bewildered.

He smiled, suddenly inspired. "Well, not really in that way. You just need to stand up for yourself. You know, get better with dealing with people."

Ben's looked confused. "Pardon me, but how?" He queried, frowning a bit in confusion.

"Well mom and I could always use help in the diner. As long as you don't mind the low salary much," he told him, "Oh. I'm not trying to lessen my work load or anything. But taking people's orders, striking up small talk if needed, might help your people skills."

"I... I see..." Ben hummed contemplatively.

Jim smiled. "You don't have to answer now. You think on it. But if it helps, I wouldn't mind having someone to converse with when things aren't busy."

Ben returned the smile easily.

\*\*3HJHJHJHJ3\*\*

"That was soo hard!" Jack exclaimed as he and Hiccup met at the high school entrance gate.

"What was? Do you need help in one of your classes?" Hiccup barely managed to keep his grimace hidden. The blazing white bandages wrapped around Jack's face with the band-aids smoothed over his cheek and elbows. Looking at them, he could recall the tightly wrapped gauze around Jack's pale chest and belly. To top it off, his puffy left eye was ringed with dark bruises.

"No! Just going through the entire day of class with a raging headache! What was the point? I should've just stayed home!" Jack whined pitifully.

"You really should've. You should also not do the concert tonight. Never mind your limbs being okay for dancing, Your head isn't going to like it," Hiccup pointed out sternly, knowing it to be a lost cause even as he spoke.

"I have to. I made a promise to do my best for Aster, Hic. I'm not gonna bail, you saw how desperate he was when he first roped me in!"

"You didn't want to be in it in the first place though..." Hiccup

said darkly. "And he wasn't that desperate."

Jack gave his shoulder a squeeze. "Hic he is easily annoyed with me yet he begged me to join."

Hiccup sighed, resigned. "We should get home and put a bag of ice on your head," he said instead.

"Nu-uh. We have to go to hit the pow-pow first, sneaky." He wrapped his arm around Hiccup's neck and noogied his hair.

"JACKSON!" Hiccup exclaimed with his face rapidly flushing as students walked by whispering and giggling.

"To the snow pow-pow!"

Hiccup looked up as they neared the hill at the park where they're currently doing practice. Freshmen newbies were snow boarding while the veteran members were skiing. Jack had long since released his throat and was walking nonchalantly with his arms swinging slightly at his side, but Hiccup could see another story in his boyfriend's eyes, a story of pain and betrayal and loss a loss of pride, loyalty, trust and love. Jack loved the snow. He had always loved it, from the time he could barely walk and his father gave him a snow board too big for him to hold. Giving it up because of some ignorant bastards was tearing him up inside, and his usually cheery, winter icy-blue eyes were dark with the pain.

"YO, COACH!" Jack called out.

"JACK FROST!" A huge roar answered, using his stage name during championships. A large horde of young boys some from Jack's classes ran towards the two boys. Both Jack and Hiccup froze in place, rigid with shock. Almost every face was anxious, warring plainly with anger once they saw the bandages.

"WHOA! Hold off! No jumping on me! I ain't up to it!" Jack exclaimed, throwing up his hands in an effort to halt the large mass of running teenage boys.

"Oh, sorry!" they came to a halt and tumbled among themselves. "Wah!"

"You guys!" Jack laughed, sweating a bit as Hiccup tried not to chuckle.

"Hey Jack, I'm not really fanatic like these kiddies," a Junior paused, staring down at the freshmen before rolling his eyes, "but you're a good captain and a better player. Even if you're younger than me. Whatever you're here to talk to coach about think about it real hard, 'kay? The captain I know is a really hard worker."

"Kevin thanks." Jack winced as the guy nudged his head with a fist.

"Yeah, yeah. Why don't you just start doing your job and get these weaklings in shape." Kevin turned towards the crowd of first and third years and waved them back. "C'MON SLACKERS! BACK ONTO TRAINING! I DIDN'T CART OFF ALL THOSE BOARDS HERE FOR NOTHING!" They all jogged



back to the pow-pow, waving and calling out encouragements to Jack as they did, leaving a huddle of shamed-faced sophomores and an equally shamed-looking coach.

"Jack! We're sorry our classmates jumped you! We had no part of it! Albedo, Hans and the othersâ€¦ we don't care if you're gay or not! You may be a first year, but you're a damn good player and captain!" one of sophomores quickly blurted.

Everyone's head bobbed in agreement.

"I should'veâ€¦ I should've realized what was going on. I'm sorry, Overland. I didn't do my job because I was uncomfortable with you being so openly gay." The older man scratched the back of his neck. "I thought they were all talk and that I should just let you handle it when I should've stopped it immediately."

"You're completely right. This whole incident might have been avoided if you had made penalties for their behavior." Hiccup's angry voice interrupted the apology. The coach looked down in surprise. Snapping green eyes bored into his dark brown. "However, the only ones truly at fault are those who did it. What has happened to them?"

"Iâ€¦I could only disband them from the team. Overland didn't lodge a formal complaint and he didn't actually ID them. We all knowâ€¦but we can't prove they actually did it without a word from Overland," the coach informed Hiccup, trying to calm the angry boy who looked younger than some of the coach's freshies.

Hiccup looked up at Jack.

He looked away edgily.

"You didn't tell me that, Jackson," The auburnette ground out angrily.

"Iâ€¦I didn't want to make a big deal."

"You almost had a concussion! They broke your ribs! You cannot see out your left eye! How many times do I have to repeat myself?"

"Yeahâ€¦wellâ€¦I ain't gonna rat on them."

Hiccup lowered his face and his shoulders began to shake.

"Hicâ€¦you aren't crying are you?" Jack grabbed his shoulders and leaned down a bit to try and see his face.

"You imbecile! You stupid brat!"

"Brat?"

"YOU'RE ACTING LIKE A FOOL- like a child!" Hiccup shouted, his face bright red with rage. The coach was hiding his grin with little success. This little auburnette reminded the coach of his wife.

"What?" Jack gasped, shell-shocked by the sheer volume of Hiccup's voice.

"They hurt you, Jack, and put you in the hospital! Yet you're more concerned with your dignity. These people are bullies!" Hiccup's blazing emerald eyes were glaring fiercely into Jack's, like a forest on fire, making the taller boy cringe and sweat. His lips were pressed tightly together and his whole body was shaking. "I refuse to believe you don't know who they were."

"You're right, I do know." Jack sighed. "Yo, Coach, I gotta get home. I was gonna quit, butâ€¦I guess I don't need to anymore." Jack sighed again and reached down to grasp Hiccup's hand.

"Jack! Do not ignore me!"

"Let's get home, Hic. See ya, Coach! I'LL BE BACK MONDAY, YOU SLACKERS!" Jack winced at his own voice.

"HE WILL NOT! YOU WILL NOT, JACKSON OVERLAND!"

Jack pulled the angrily yelling Hiccup away from the soccer field.

"YO JACK!"

Jack looked over his shoulder at Flynn.

"WHAT?"

"YOUR BOYFRIEND LOOKS LIKE A GIRL! AND ACTS LIKE ONE, TOO!"

"SCREW YOU, FLYNN! MY BOYFRIEND IS A HELL OF A LOT SCARIER THAN ANY GIRL!"

"Are you really sure?" asked a dangerously low voice. Jack stiffened. "Girls can be really scary, too. Shall I prove it to you?"

"Jackâ€¦I would be angry about that commentâ€¦but who is this?" Hiccup asked, glancing from the a pixie-cut girl to the cowering Jack.

"H-H-Hi, Roxanne Richie right?" Jack sweated slightly and turned. A very thick and dark aura was emanating from her slight form.

"At least you remember my name!" She darted forward and grasped his collar tightly. "Do you know how much shit I'm in because of you, you pansy fairy?"

"That's a little harsh, Ms. Richie..."

"YOU BLEW ME OFF FOR TWO WEEKS! DO YOU KNOW HOW MUCH OF A LAUGHINGSTALK I AM IN THE JOURNALISM CLUB RIGHT NOW? I SWORE THEM AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW RIGHT AFTER YOU FIRST CAME OUT! YOU'RE ALMOST OLD NEWS NOW! YOU WILL TELL ME WHAT COLOR UNDERWEAR YOU HAVE BEFORE I'M THROUGH WITH YOU!"

"HICCUP!" Jack squeaked, glanced over his shoulder.

Hiccup merely shrugged. "Her claim seems irrefutable. You promised an interview and ignored your promise." Green eyes flashed dangerously. "Should I wait here for you or just meet you at

home?"

"Hiccuuuup!"

"Oh, this is him?" Her eyes glinted evilly. Hiccup took a step back. Too late. His wrist was captured in her iron grip. "Goody, we'll just make it really good and have a double interview. No more laughingstock for me."

\*\*3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Dimitri watched as the two chatted animatedly and ate banana-chocolate crepes. A man at the crepe both called something out and the nerdâ€¦ Ben? â€¦ stood up and waved toward him. Ben turned towards Jim, jumped forward to hug him, pulled away, and ran off from the park. He turned to wave, his blush clearly visible, as he tossed the small paper her crepe had been wrapped in into a trash can.

Jim waved back and turned towards the path that would lead him out of the park. Dimitri quickly walked forward and quietly stepped up to Jim's side. Silence remained between them as Jim nibbled away on his crepe.

"Did you have fun today?"

"I did."

"Good."

"I did tell him, too. Ben was VERY understanding."

"I see."

"Whatever."

The silence came back and wrapped them in a thick, awkward bubble. Jim crumpled the paper in his hand as he put the last bit of thin, baked dough in his mouth. The exit to the park loomed in front of them.

"My mom doesn't know I'm gay," Dimitri finally broke the silence. Their steady footsteps stopped. "My mom thinks I have a girlfriend."

"â€¦"

"Asterâ€¦ doesn't know, either. He thought I was trying to date Emma and reamed into me for breaking up her relationship with Jamie."

"â€¦"

"I don't have any friendsâ€¦ not really. Not even when I went to school back then, no one was very close to me. Well, at least, I haven't been able to tell anyone about it." Dimitri dragged his hand through his hair heavily.

"Soâ€¦ you're a hypocrite," Jim stated bluntly.

"I guess so."

They remained standing still.

"I'm scared." Dimitri's voice whispered into the silence. "I'm scaredâ€¦ of being hatedâ€¦ of being hurtâ€¦ of being looked at funny and of being laughed at. I'm a weakâ€¦ and selfish person. Butâ€¦" He gripped his chest tightly. "I sometimes feelâ€¦ like I have this other meâ€¦ this horrible, selfish, dark person who lives inside my mind. He doesn't want any to know his weakness, but he can't stand if someone he wantsâ€¦ acts like he wants someone else. Whenâ€¦ when that guy came upâ€¦ and you spoke kindly to him, kinder than how you were to me when we first metâ€¦ that other meâ€¦ got angry. It wanted to hurt you because you dared to even talk to someone who wasn't me. It's likeâ€¦ I want to lock you in a box and keep you there so only I can have youâ€¦ but I don't want anyone else to know." He stared at his toes with narrowed, hard eyes. "I'm pathetic. I'm sorry, Jim." His eyes pressed tightly together, grimacing painfully.

A hand touched his own. He looked up surprised, eyes bright.

"You are such a sap." A soft smile lightened Jim's features. "You do realize this isn't a fairy tale, and you're not a witch, and I am most definitely not a princess locked in a tower. So get over yourself, Dimwit." he said affectionately.

Dimitri's hand reached up and caressed Jim's cheek. "You really make me want to lock you up, though." he smiled. "maybe in a pretty jewelry box."

"You try it, and I'll hurt you."

Dimitri chuckled a bit before he sombered up. "Jim... Willâ€¦ will you hold my hand when I tell my mom and brother... and my dad, too?"

"Sure, Dimitri. You wouldn't be able to handle it without me." Jim's voice was baldly matter-of-fact. Dimitri laughed into that brown hair. He pulled away and placed a soft, timid kiss on Jim's small mouth. His narrow eyes widened in shock and a small blush covered his cheek bones.

"I know." Dimitri's eyes lit up suddenly. "Before I make an ass of myself again, you wanna go to my brother's concert tonight? I got some awesome tickets!" He stepped back and dug through his pockets. "Here they are! Whaddya say?"

Jim plucked a single slip of paper from Dimitri's grasp and eyed it apprehensively. "I guess I could. I need to ask my mom, though. I'm usually not up past nineâ€¦"

"Nine?"

"Punishment for going through construction sites and restricted areas," Jim sighed. Dimitri snickered behind his fist.

"Makes sense. I better walk you home real quick, huh?"

"Yeah."

Their hands clasped and they left the park behind, smiling happily.

\*\*3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Anna wiggled excitedly in front of her mirror.

"Last night was absolutely delicious! And tonight makes my weekend absolutely perfect! It's barely even started!" she exclaimed. Her brown hair bounced as she spun around. "Aren't you just so excited?"

Elsa smiled back. "Well! I do have perfect seating!"

"Ohâ€| rightâ€| that would be why." Anna sighed out in envy the side of her mouth and plopped on the bed.

"Should you get the rest of your clothes on? I don't think Cristoff will appreciate it if you go to the concert wearing only your underclothes."

"I'm not going in my panties and bra, Elsa!"

"I didn't know you liked going commandoâ€|" Elsa trailed off with thoughtful frown. She grinned when Anna punched her head just a little too soft to hurt.

"Anyway! Didn't you think up a game plan?"

"The truth worked last time."

"After me screaming at you and calling Haley the '\_f\_' word, and Jack almost hating you," Anna retorted, deadpanned. Elsa laughed humorlessly.

"I get the point," Elsa assured her. "But in the end, you forgave me. Even Jack. I'm sureâ€| I'm sure Haley will at least see reason, if not forgive me."

"Haley is a great person and very understanding. He'sâ€| very wise, sometimes. And a downright genius, too. I'm sure he already knows why you did what you did. And now that he has his guy and you aren't being a bitch about it, I don't see why he won't forgive and forget." Anna winked cheekily. "Now, let's get you maked-up and me dressed."

Elsa laughed.

\*\*3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

"WHERE THE BLOODY HELL HAVE YOU BEEN?" screamed Aster.

"Please, Aster, we were abducted by an overly enthusiastic high school reporter," Hiccup sighed rubbed his head.

"My head really hurts, man. I don't know if I should do rehearsal," Jack moaned.

"You are doing, rehearsal, showpony. Put in earplugs, and we'll tell you if you mess up."

"EARPLUGS! I can't wear earplugs!" Jack slapped his hands over his ears looking horrified. "I have to hear the music before I get right down to feeling the rhythm-"

"You'll still hear it dumbbo, just not as loud to blow off your ear drums."

"-and I'll get all edgy. I won't be able to focus much on the routine with something clogging up my ear hole-"

"Ima gonna clog up your assHOLE, asshole!"

The guys in the room snickered. The girls rolled their eyes.

"-I might overthink and I'll start correcting myself for no reason! I'll get paranoid! Worse than you!"

"You're joking," Aster's voice was dangerous.

"Nope! Give me a break, I haven't done this longer like you guys, and my mind moves slower than the music, ya know? I just stop thinking and move to the beat. I'll won't know the cues to stop and when to move wherever with earplugs distracting me. I mean I hate wearing shies just cuz the feeling of my soles trapped in 'em distracts me, ya know?" Jack shrugged.

Aster's fingers reached for Jack's throat, just barely stopping short and twitching madly.

"Aster! please! put your hands down. That makes me feel uncomfortable." Hiccup pressed slightly downward on Aster's outstretched arms.

"You'll rehearse with earplugs. Didn't you know we'd have to wear them onstage, you dumbass?" Aster seethed, shoulders high and tense.

"Why?" Jack gaped at him.

"BECAUSE WE'LL BE SURROUNDED BY SPEAKERS AND AN AUDIENCE THE SIZE OF A FOOTBALL FIELD, YOU DUMBASS! IT COULD BLOW OUT YOUR HEARING!"

"You're going to blow it out first," Jack muttered rubbing his ears.

"EARPLUGS-NOW!"

The group quickly set up about doing their warm ups, Guy checked out the sound system, making sure the tracks were ordered in sequence. One of the back up singers, a blond girl named Honey Lemon, passed around a newly opened pack of earplugs. Jack glared at them and tentatively put them in.

"What if I can't get them out? Or I accidentally shove them in farther when I try? Will I have to go to hospital again?" He asked worriedly, a little loudly due to his muted surroundings.

Hiccup smiled and squeezed his shoulder. "Just do your best." He

spoke loudly and carefully mouthed his words.

Jack grinned. "What?"

Aster grabbed his hand and quickly dragged him over to his center of the studio. Several minutes into the rehearsal, most of the dancers had already stopped dancing and just stared in amazement at their newest member. Jack's face was a mask of frustrated concentration as he went through the moves and steps stiffly, going at it by memory. He was either ahead or behind, rushed to catch up, slowed down and then realized he had moved too fast. He groaned and tossed his hoodie back before sprawling down at the floor.

"I can't do it!" he hollered loudly.

"Oh, shut up!" Aster's voice was completely without venom, however. He massaged his forehead.

"Jack's right. He's a really good dancer and great at executing the techniques, hell, he taught us the new ones, dude." Jonathan said, as if mentioning a consolation.

Jet rolled his eyes. "But once you put those earplugs in, he overthinks his movements. He can't flow."

"He can't wear 'em, man."

"He'll blow out his hearing," Aster protested.

"People in the front row don't wear 'em, and their right in front of the speakers. My friend just said he's deaf for about a day." Jonathan pointed out.

"A day?" Aster chewed his lip.

"He has a head injury. It'll hurt him more than any adrenaline-rushed teenager in the front row," Hiccup disagreed.

Jack was cautiously trying to pry out his earplugs.

"Stop it, Jack. I'll get them."

"What?"

Hiccup pushed away his hands and eyed the earplugs. While Hiccup quickly removed the offending pieces of foamy-stuff, Aster frowned in thought.

"We're going to have to chance it." Aster sighed.

"What! No! You can't be serious, Aster!" Hiccup snapped, throwing the bright orange pieces into the trash.

"Showpony, do you think you can handle about four hours of really loud noise?" Aster asked, completely ignoring the sputtering auburnette in front of him.

"Maybe. But not if we have the amps up as high as we usually do for practice." Jack said.

"All right. We'll keep them just loud enough to hear for now, ne? Then, during the concert, we'll give you an hour of straight noise. If you can't handle it, we'll stop at the break," Aster decided, blue eyes worried.

"Only an hour?" Jet frowned. "We haven't done a show that short since our third month in."

"An hour will be good enough for our first concert and new player. We'll just say we have to break him in," Honey Lemon spoke up, shrugging.

"Or we could say the truth? I was beat up when some assholes tried to sabotage the concert." Jack shrugged. "I don't really mind if you even tell them I'm gay. As long as I don't get shot for it."

"I really don't like this idea," Hiccup muttered. Jack glanced towards him, frowning.

"Do you really think it could really damage my brain?"

"Yes, but I don't know for sure. I could call your doctor and find out," Hiccup suggested.

"Yeah, you do that. We'll rehearse while you do. We're running out of time." Guy pointed towards the clock. "All right, Back-up dancers, lead dancers and free-stylers suit up, guys, we'll be on in ten!" The tech support and band manager clapped his hands. "Those singing, I'll hand over your clipped-on lapels when you get in position."

About twenty to thirty people scrambled to position.

Jack kissed Hiccup's cheek and smiled. "I'm sure it'll be fine, Hic."

The auburnette smiled back before hurrying to the back room to make the call.

"Haley!" He turned towards Emma's voice and waved. She quickly jogged over.

"I thought you'd be here." She smiled up at Hiccup. "Meet my friend, Eret." She turned and frowned.

"Where is he?" Hiccup asked in not a little confusion. Surely Emma wasn't hallucinating a new friend from stressâ€¦ right?

"I have no ideaâ€¦" Emma puffed out her cheek irritably. Hiccup sighed in relief. "I think he went to get a drink. I thought he meant after I introduced you. That was stupid of me."

Hiccup chortled. "I have to make a call, so if you'll excuse me."

"Yeah, no problem! Hurry up so we can chat some, Haley!"

"All right." He smiled and walked away typing in a number.

Emma rocked back on her heels and hummed slightly. "Concert, concert! I'm at a concert! For free! Whee hee!" she giggled at her nonsense



song.

It had been a good day. Mostly because it had been a half-day at school, and so hadn't seen much of her ex-boyfriend. In fact, because it was mainly PE day, she hadn't seen him at all. At least, he didn't see her looking at him. She had spent the PE class indulging in her hunger and watched him run and smile and laugh around the gymnasium. The ache was a slow burning in her heart now. It was a little comforting, feeling its slight pain constantly inside her. Like it was proof she wasn't unfeeling or dead. There was still something beating in there, weakly and painfully, but beating.

\_For himâ€|maybe one dayâ€|I'll be with him again. But for nowâ€|I should move on and return Eret's feelings for me. He's been so understanding and good to me. Dating him would be niceâ€|even if I could never feel for him what I feel right now for the idiotic brunette\_. She giggled into her palm and spun on her toes.

"Concert! Concert! I'm at a concert!" Emma sang happily as she started towards the canteen.

"Wellâ€|if that isn't just lucky. I am, too."

Emma felt her spine stiffened. Her fingers pressed against her lips. Sheâ€| She couldn't turn around.

"Aren't you gonna say hi or something? You ignore me at school." His footsteps thudded lightly in her direction. She could barely suppress the shudders racing through her.

"I know the truth, Emma. I'mâ€| I'm sorry I couldn't trust you."

A small sob was building in her throat as his familiar voice filled her ears. She couldn't turn around, but she was desperate to, longing so intense it hurt.

"I was never good enough for you, you know? I was always thought you would break up with me. You're so pretty and kind and goodâ€|your only fault is your pride, I guess. It took a long time for me to realize that's what it was. Pride." His voice was so sad.

\_Jamie! JAMIE BENNETTE! JAY!\_ His name was screaming in her head. But she couldn't speak or her weakness would show. Her teeth dug into the thin skin of her bottom lip. His hand brushed lightly over her thick hair, his fingertips just barely grazing the sensitive skin of her neck. Goosebumps traveled down her body at his touch.

"I have a girlfriend, now."

Her beating heart stopped.

"Sheâ€| She helped me when I was sad. She made sure I didn't catch pneumonia when I fell asleep in the rain... thatâ€| that day. She really likes me. Andâ€| and I really like her. Soâ€| So I can't just break up with her for a girl I never really got close to. A girl who couldn't trust me, just like I couldn't trust her. I wishâ€| I wish we could've." His fingers fell and his feet shuffled over the gravel of the floor of the trashed out warehouse where the concert was held. He passed her without looking towards her face. His back was to her, and she never saw his face.

He was leaving her. He was leaving again. Her sob forced itself out as she spun around.

"Jamie," she gasped. He didn't turn around even though his footsteps faltered. His fists shoved themselves into his pockets. She pressed her trembling fingers against her mouth. "Iâ€¦ I'll be waiting for when it happensâ€¦ when we can trust each other," she whispered. He nodded, his face still turned away.

He didn't want her to see his weakness, either. His tears were his secret, too, now. Nobody would ever see him cry again, until the day she promised happened. He forced his feet to continue.

Emma forgot about her need to go to the canteen, where he was obviously heading, anyway. What she needed was something bigger than her heartache, something indifferent to pain.

She needed the waves.

**\*\*3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\***

Eret sighed as he backed away from the smiling young woman, apparently one of the band members' girlfriends who tried to handle expenses by selling food and drink at concerts. He balanced his tray of drinks and his carton of nachos carefully as he walked towards the door.

\_I hope Emma likes nachos. I don't think she likes hotdogs more than nachos, though.\_

"Watch where you're going!" warned a girl's voice. It wasâ€¦ familiar. He looked up and blinked. "OH GOD! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?"

"Uhmâ€¦ you're from my schoolâ€¦ aren't you?" Eret blurted in surprise seeing the hardcore, blond in front of him.

Her blue eyes twitched dangerously. "You don't remember me, do you?"

"You look different when you're in school clothes, Hofferson."

She looked completely different. Her jeans showed off her long legs and her '\_Easter Maneuvers\_' tee shirt. Her normally braided hair was loose and framing her face, making her look softerâ€¦ prettierâ€¦ like her voiceâ€¦ when it wasn't screaming.

"I guess you're right? I look so dowdy at school," she sighed sadly and straightened her spectacles. "Despite your compliment-"

\_When did I say it was a compliment, even if it was?\_

"-I will not forgive you, Eret junior son of Eret senior! Bastard." She flipped that long blond hair over her shoulder. He saw more skin flash, showing off an amazing view of her throat.

\_She's really prettyâ€¦ even if she's a bit hardcore to the extent of being manly. Doesn't she have a boyfriend to stop her from doing that?\_

"Astrid!"

Her eyes instantly lit up happily. They looked prettier that way, too, just like the rest of her when she wasn't at schoolâ€¦ disliking him immensely.

Like he disliked her, of course.

She turned and ran towards the boy approaching whom had called her name. "Jamie!" She hugged him and leaned back. "Are you all right? You look a little red-eyed."

"I'm fine." The guy smiled a huge stupid grin and hugged her waist. "You want some nachos?"

"No! I love hot dogs! Can we get some hot dogs?"

Eret already knew he had been dismissed from her mind when her boyfriend arrived. It didn't make him angry at all. She was annoying anyway. Who cared? Not him.

"OY! Who are you? You look really familiar."

"Yesâ€¦ you do, too." Eret realized, once again surprised.

Jamie's eyes widened. "You're from soccer! I played you at the summer championship!"

"Ohâ€¦ rightâ€¦ you hurt my ankle." Eret realized. He looked down. "I have to go, however. The nachos are getting cold. Excuse me. Jamie Bennette right?"

"Yeah.!"

"Hofferson."

"Junior." Astrid huffed.

Their voices were equally cold as they nodded to each other. Eret hurriedly left. He left the small stand and looked around. People were slowly filling the warehouse in a line that crowded even the deserted docks. Emma, however, wasn't inside the warehouse anymore. Eret continued past the crowds of people outside before he managed to find her. Her slight form was some ways a way, standing on a thick wooden pile, the wind tugging at her hair.

"You hungry, Emma?" he asked gently as he neared the wide post. She looked down at him. Her eyes and nose were slightly red.

"Hey, you okay? Your eyes are red." Eret frowned. \_Wasâ€¦ Was thatâ€¦ Jamie from Emma's school?\_

"Yes, thank you." Her smile was small and sad. "Butâ€¦ I need just a moment longer." She turned back.

"All right."

"Eretâ€¦ Iâ€¦ I don't think I can love you right nowâ€¦ butâ€¦ I know how you feel about me."

"I thought so," Eret acknowledged, shifting and feeling uncomfortable. He wasn't good with feelings.

"Iâ€¦ I wouldn't mindâ€¦ going out with youâ€¦ as long as you understood my feelings."

"I do."

"Good."

"Yeah."

"I'm glad I have you with me, Eret."

"I'm glad, too."

\*\*3 HJHJHJHJ 3\*\*

Anna waved as she and Cristoff entered the line. Elsa watched as they were swallowed into the mass. She turned with a sigh to find the back door Aster had spoken of. A crowd of young teenage girls and a few boys were crowded around it.

"Excuse me, I need to get to that door."

"Who are you?" sniped one girl. Another girl pushed her away. Elsa blinked as Drew Tanaka from homeroom stepped forward.

"I didn't know Jackson and you were so close anymore. Did he really give you a backstage pass?" she demanded incredulously.

"No. Aster did. He told me to come here. Is it locked or something?" Elsa replied automatically, more concerned about getting in than watching her tongue.

They merely stared at her. She edged around them and knocked on the door. A small slot opened at about hip level.

"Can I see your pass?" said a boy's voice from inside.

"Here." She shoved it through the slot.

"Oh, right, Aster said you'd be coming. I'm Guy the band's tech support and manager. Did you see his brother?" The door opened as the sentences ended. She looked up to see warm eyes looking down at her.

"Hello, Guy. I didn't see Dimitri, I'm sorry." She stepped into the room behind him.

"Too bad. I really hate opening that door. You just missed rehearsal. Follow me, okay, miss?" He winked at her when she blushed. "You got really great eyes, missâ€¦?"

"Elsa." She introduced herself quickly.

"Oh?" His warm eyes widened. "Snow Princess...?"

"Excuse me?"

"Nothing, I just like your name." He opened a door and she quickly entered.

"Elsa!" Jack exclaimed from the long couch in the middle of the drafty green room.

"Ah snow princess! Cool! I'm glad you showed up." Aster rose from his chair and walked over to her looking calmer than he had been all evening. "Did you have trouble outside the door?"

"Noâ€| apparently, they were so shocked that you gave me the pass, they froze."

The other guys laughed. Except for a lone figure standing by the water jug. He was looking away, utterly silent.

\_Oh noâ€|\_

"Oh Hale is sulking right now," Aster whispered loudly, smirking a bit.

"Why?"

"I still think it's a bad idea."

Elsa realized with a start she must've interrupted something when Hiccup turned around and glared up at his taller boyfriend.

"Hic! Pleaseâ€| he said it was bad, not fatal," Jack wheedled.

Hiccup frowned angrily.

"May I ask what's going on?" Elsa spoke up, becoming more confused by the second.

"You already know he got beat up last night?" Elsa jumped as green eyes met hers, filled with heat.

"Y-yeah."

"He almost had a concussion. The doctor said it's a bad idea, really bad idea, for him to go out there and play without earplugs."

"Why can't he just wear earplugs?" Elsa inquired, blinking.

"Too distracting." Jack mumbled.

"What?"

Aster sighed. "Long story, shiela."

"We have deal, though, that Hic keeps forgetting. After an hour, if it's too bad, we'll stop, cut it short." Jack grimaced. "I'd really hate it, too, but I can't mess my brain up for a concert."

"It's only one concert, too. I'm sure he'll more than make up for it next time," a back up dancer by the name of Sasha mused.

"I know, I know. I justâ€¦ I don't want you to hurt yourself," Hiccup sighed.

Jack quickly gathered him up into a backbreaking hug.

"I don't want to be hurt, either, Jack!" Hiccup gasped.

"We have to go on!" Honey Lemon suddenly announced. Jack went pale and clutched Hiccup tighter.

"Let's go." Aster motioned with his hand and then turned back to Elsa. "Listen out for your song." He kissed her cheek and walked away.

"My songâ€¦?" Elsa touched her cheek and blushed.

"Elsa, over here. You're supposed to stand over here."

Elsa moved towards Hiccup's still anxious voice.

She looked over at him. He was so busy concentrating on Jack, he didn't seem to notice. The music started by the

Elsa looked past the stage and gasped. There were so many faces blurred together, it was amazing! How did they all fit in here! Aster was held in a blaze of blue spotlight as he started the routine. Two others blinked to reveal Jet and Jack before several other spotlights joined, timed with the beat to reveal the other dancers.

"I'm sorry," Elsa blurted. Hiccup turned towards her, his mind still obviously onstage as he blinked at her in puzzlement.

"Excuse me?"

Aster's voice filled the warehouse. "\_It ain't Spring but Easter is here! Got it mates, the manuevers are here!\_"

"I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I did some horrible stuff to you and my sister and Jackson, and I never apologized to you." She stared at the floor. "I'm sorry."

"Apology accepted." She looked up with surprised eyes. He smiled wryly at her. "Jack forgives you, why should I hold a grudge? You hurt him more than you hurt me."

"What?"

"You only told me the truth. You lied to him. I have no right to hold a grudge for that. Nor for the truth you told Anna. I just got there at a bad time." His smile gentled, looking rather embarrassed. "I was angry. Forgive my rudeness for that day."

Elsa's mouth shaped words soundlessly. She let out a breath and grinned. "You're just amazing, Haley."

"I am?" His green eyes were startled. Elsa giggled and turned back to the stage. He turned back with her, rather confused, but he was too worried about Jack to think overlong on it.

\*\*A/N: So... uh... hi?\*\*

\*\*\*Bricks. Tomatoes. Apples. Thrown at me.\*\*\*

\*\*... BYE \*duck to safety\*\*

## 15. My Guardian Princess

\*\*Author's Notes: I wanna be straight with everyone reading this. Not for pity or for guilt tripping but I hope you can all understand my lack of updating. Aside from trying to have a normal life as much as possible, I'm struggling with cancer. Not as bad since I seem to be recovering BUT still. Incase of any unforeseen events, I gave Paoshiro Hozomi outline of this and my account email and password. Just in case. Dont want to let you guys down, see. But like I said, I am recovering. Anyway, prayers do wonders. Thank you all.\*\*

\*\*My Guardian\*\*

\*\*Chapter Fifteen\*\*

\*\*My Guardian Princess\*\*

Elsa and Hiccup turned and watched with wide eyes. Both their men seemed so focused and far away, as if in another world. A part of them wanted to run forward, grab them, make them look at them, but another part, the part that won, just sat back and stared with hungry, devouring eyes. The two boys seemed wrapped in light, their skin glowing (read: glistened in sweat) as they dance in the beat of the music.

Something stirred inside of Hiccup. Something heavy and hot. It was almost familiar, like the feeling he had when Jack held him really tight and kissed him really hard. It was different, though, frightening and intense. It flooded into his body and pulsed with his heartbeat. He could feel the blood rushing to the top of his skin as he blushed. His eyes were trapped on Jack's tall form. Jack's mouth parted ever so vaguely to his breathing patterns from exertion and his eyes were dark with concentration. His skin looked like it had been dipped in vanilla coating and it shined. Hiccup's eyes followed a bead of sweat as it trailed down Jack's temple and then whisked away at his boyfriend tossed his head. His once white hair was short and drenched with perspiration, sticking to his damp skin. Hiccup's fingers urged to brush away the strands of hair that stuck to his forehead and linger over the tracks of sweat that ran down Jack's face and throat. Hiccup swallowed and tried, in vain, to look away. The feeling was getting heavier inside him, it was almost unbearable. His hand rose and clutched his shirt over his lower belly.

\_What's what's going on inside me!\_

\*\*3HJHJHJHJ3\*\*

Emma had managed to keep Eret near the completely opposite side of the row from Jamie. He didn't seem to mind or notice. Something else was frustrating him, though he continually assured her he was fine. Emma gripped his hand tightly and forced herself to enjoy this, her \_brother\_'s first concert. He looked great up there. Aster executed his movies with much passion you'd think he was actually fighting, they way the moves were sequenced like a faux martial arts

competition against Jack. And that wall move thing! Who knew Jack had it in him? With his green eyes that made almost every girl there swoon when they swept over the crowd. Jack, on the other hand, just exuded pheromones. He was wild, a complete rebel. Emma was thankful the outfit of choice was a sleeveless hoodie and not a tank top. It would be the end of all fan girls. The black eye and the bandages helped out a lot, too. He was the complete opposite to Aster in so many ways it hurt. But they meshed to make a picture that made even her knees weak. They were gorgeous together.

Emma could feel the disappointment well up in the crowd behind her as the last performance of the first set ended.

"Sorry everybody! We need short break for our newbie here! He got a head injury and if he's fit to play after this break, we'll continue."

"I'm fine, man!" Jack protested. He winced and clutched his head. "Damn, when did I get a headache?"

Laughter erupted through the warehouse.

"WHO IS THAT!" screamed a fanatically loud girl.

"This is Jack, everybody. He's our new member and choreographer," Aster introduced. Despite his raging headache, Jack swept a low, European bow, arms to his sides. He stood up, winking and waving, making several girls scream loudly in return. Emma and Eret winced, though Emma couldn't help but laugh.

"Are you single?" shrieked several voices at once.

"Ah no, that's why I got beat up." Jack grinned his mischievous elvish grin. Emma plunged forward as a girl behind her fainted.

Oh my god Emma thought, eyes rolling as she struggled not to laugh or slap sense into the girl almost foaming at the mouth next to her.

"You got beat up over a girl?" laughed guy's voice.

"Nope." His grin got bigger. "I got beat up for being gay."

Silence.

Then several loud, stinging screams erupted through the warehouse.

"EEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE! HE'S GAY! HOW CUTE! IT'S LIKE THAT POPULAR SLASH THING!" The screams went on.

Jack grimaced and brought up a hand to his head.

"Great job, Showpony. Now you're going to get a worse headache for being an idiot. Our fangirls happened to be the weirdest bunch of females I've ever met." Aster sighed. Laughter filled the warehouse again.

"Can we see him? Your boyfriend, Jack?"



Jack looked towards the backstage entrance.

"Er I'm sorry guys. He's real shy. I don't want him to get beat up, too, so I agree with his really fast head shake. Hic you're going to have to stop that, you're going to hurt your neck." Jack wandered offstage with a worried frown. "No, stop that! What's wrong with you? STOP MOVING AWAY FROM ME!"

More laughter as people realized he forgot to take off his lapel.

\_"THAT FROSTY IMBECILE\_" Aster stormed offstage switching off his lapel. They only used the headsets for concerts to preserve them because they were really expensive.

"All right, everybody! Let's make this break thirty minutes so everybody has time to use the restroom. If we come back onstage, we'll go for the full swing!" announced Jet as he took off back stage.

A loud cheering filled the warehouse. People began to force themselves out the doors to use the public restrooms just outside the vicinity. Emma gripped Eret's hand tighter and led him through the crowd.

"Are you enjoying yourself, Emma?" Eret asked, bending low and speaking close to her ear so she could hear. She turned to grin up at him.

"You bet! Isn't my brother amazing? Haley is going to either scold him or baby him for the next thirty minutes. I can't decide which is funnier," she joked, laughing lightly as they were jostled by the crowd.

"EMMA!"

"DIMITRI! Thank God!" Emma rushed forward as the familiar boy's voice rose over the crowd, thin and barely heard over the increasing madness. She spun around and saw the sort-of-russian pushing through the crowd, smiling and apologizing to people even while surged forward and protecting another boy following behind. She dropped Eret's hand to throw her arms around Dimitri's neck as he neared. "How have you been? Any progress with Jimbo you didn't tell me about?"

"Please, don't tell me \_another\_ person will be calling me that?" retorted a deadpan voice. Emma smiled and looked around Jim to see the skaterboy

"\_Sorry\_, \_he calls you that, so I call you that, too. I'll call you Jim, if you'd rather," Emma offered pleasantly.

"I'd appreciate that, thanks." Jim replied.

"This is Eret. Eret, this is my friend Dimitri and this is Jim," Emma said quickly as Eret cleared his throat quietly.

"Have you seen Astrid? We've been emailing, but she got a new boyfriend and I haven't had the chance to go see her or meet him,"

Emma piped up suddenly. Her eyes were on Jim expectedly.

"She's here with him, actually. She said they'd be going home together as soon as the concert's over, so not to wait for them. He's a little weird, but okay." Jim muttered mostly to himself.

"How disappointing. I was hoping to see her," Emma mumbled. Eret frowned softly, looking away.

"Oh?" Dimitri turned towards Jim and lifted an eyebrow. "What's his name? I was in the bathroom when you met with them, remember?"

"Oh, no! We have to hurry! The girls will be surrounding the back door by now!" Emma hurried them forward.

"It's really only supposed to be me and Emma going in." Dimitri chewed his lip as they neared the door. "The guys are cool, but it's cramped in there with the number of people involved in the concert performance. Plus, if they don't follow the rules they made for themselves, it'd never work out, you know? I think you and Eret should wait here."

Jim gave Dimitri a look that says '\_you owe me' \_since dealing with people outside school and at the diner wasn't his strong suit. Dimitri looked sheepish but he was about as uncomfortable of it as he was, leaving his man with another, a muscular one to boot.

"Okay. I'll see you after the break," Eret said, with a glance towards Emma. She smiled up at him apologetically.

"Thanks, Eret."

The two friends separated themselves from their partners and hurried through the back door past the obsessive fans. The door slammed shut behind them.

"Hey! Dim! There you are!" Aster exclaimed, walking forward to give his younger brother a one-armed, back-slapping hug.

"Sorry, bro. I brought Jim, so I hung out with him instead of coming back here."

"It's cool. Though I'd figure a teen could handle being in a concert alone."

"We're kind of we're really close." Dimitri pointedly looked anywhere but at Emma. Her eyes darkened at his words.

"Where's my brother?" she asked quickly.

"He's hanging in his room with Haley," Elsa answered walking forward. Her hands were filled with water bottles. "Here, everybody, water."

"Right on! Thanks!" The other performers cheered and grabbed them as she tossed them.

"His headache got kind of bad. Haley is making sure he stays quiet and keeps ice on his head." Elsa pointed towards a door. Jack's name was written on it in Magic Marker.

Emma nodded coldly at her and walked away. Elsa smiled sadly as she plopped down on the threadbare, sagging couch and pressing the cold water bottle to her forehead. Emma pushed open the door, and then quickly closed it, her face blushing heatedly. She spun around, fell back against the door, and stared at the ground, hands pressed to her red face.

"Emma?" Dimitri queried.

"I think I'll give them a few moments alone." Emma voice was quite adamant as she glanced up at him, eyes sparkling. Snickers filled the small room as they realized what she had seen.

\*\*3HJHJHJHJ3\*\*

As soon as Jack had stepped in the room- which used to be a pantry- and sat him down. He turned to the little cabinet, grabbed the orange pill bottle, and grabbed the waiting water bottle. He turned back to Jack, who was grinning widely, face sweaty and flushed.

"Do you know how stupid you are?" Hiccup ignored the shaking in his hands as he shook pills onto his palm. "Take these, don't speak, and let me put ice on your head."

"I'm okay, really! My head's fine. Just a little achy. I don't feel a thing up there." His eyes shined excitedly. He bolted down the painkillers and grinned. "It's so awesome! Rehearsal is nothing like it, Hic! The lights are hotter than the sun and I'm all covered in sweat, but I don't even realize it. It's like I'm in some other place and there's someone else playing, but I know it's me!" Jack stood up and paced the tiny room, tall lanky body radiating energy. "I always liked to play, but I never knew that playing for a whole warehouse of people could make me feel like this!"

"Like what?"

"Like invincible or something!" Jack turned towards Hiccup and grasped his upper arms. "It's amazing! It's as good as a snow day! It's almost as good as kissing you." Jack's eyes glinted mischievously. Hiccup blushed.

"I'm glad I'm better than a snow day and creative dancing It raises my self-esteem immeasurably," Hiccup wryly joked.

"I wonder you know how people compare stuff to sex? I bet that was as good as sex!"

Hiccup flushed up to his hair line.

"Hic? Oh, I'm sorry! I know that stuff embarrasses you," Jack grinned weakly, rubbing the back of his neck.

"N-No. That's not it." Hiccup looked away and focused on the drop of sweat quivering on the inside of Jack's elbow. It slid downwards following the crease formed in his skin.

"Hiccup?"

"You when you're up there when I saw you up there I felt like I had

something burning in here." He gripped his shirt over his belly again. "I'd never felt it before. I wanted to I just wanted to run up to you and kiss you until I couldn't see straight anymore. It was strange. I like kissing you very much but I've never wanted to send you flying to the ground."

Jack's face flamed just as bright as Hiccup's. "R-really?"

"Y-yeah " Hiccup took a deep breath. "I looked it up."

"Huh?" That last bit made zero sense to Jack and he stared at the awkwardly shuffling redhead in front of him.

"I looked up sodomy laws and age of consent," Hiccup rushed to explain. Jack gaped at him. "After Anna explained to me that you will be experienced a barrage of hormonal fluctuation, I began asking questions I never asked before. I've never been one to contain my curiosity, so I researched online, as I am wont to do." Hiccup told him, smirking wryly as if at himself.

"What's sodomy again?" Jack asked, knowing he was probably missing something important in there. Hiccup rolled his eyes.

"For simplicity's sake, sodomy is anal sex."

"Uh," Jack replied smartly. Actually, make that dumbly

"Age of consent is thirteen to seventeen years of age." Hiccup frowned. "That seems very young to me. In some Middle Eastern states, young men under seventeen years of age are hanged for having sex, or even touching each other suggestively. Strange, isn't it?"

Jack blanched. "I'm never going to the Middle East, ever."

Hiccup laughed loudly. "Agreed."

"Why'd you bring that up?"

"I I don't know." He blinked. "I guess it's been weighing on my mind and seeing as you brought up sex, I thought I might as well share information."

"Right."

They stared down at their toes.

"Hic?"

"Yeah?" Hiccup looked up at met Jack's heated eyes, blinking in surprise at the intense look in them.

"I won't push you to do anything you don't want to do, age of consent or not. It's up to you and me to choose what or when we do whatever we do. I really do love you, Hic, I promise." He smiled and cupped the auburnette's face.

"I love you, too." Hiccup hesitated, then lifted himself up on his toes and slowly slid his arms around Jack's neck. He pressed his lips hard against Jack's, swiftly pulling away. Half-lidded emerald green eyes met Jack's icy winter gaze gaze. "I really, really, really want

to kiss you until we're dizzy, now," Hiccup whispered his face a blazing red, his freckles non-existent.

"Uh okay," Jack agreed, before laughing. Hiccup chuckled with him, cheeks still flushed.

Jack's pale hand cupped the back of Hiccup's head, lowering his mouth over Hiccup's, eagerly deepening the kiss and ignoring the pounding in his head. Hiccup clenched Jack's shirt, the cloth twisting in his fists. He braced himself on his tiptoes as he pressed up against Jack's chest. Their equilibrium tottered and Jack fell back, causing Hiccup to grin when Jack's back hit the wall and he '\_oof\_'d. Within moments, Jack had already regained the earlier momentum on their kiss, tongues sweeping and sliding together, lips moving and slightly sticky with sweat and friction. Jack reached down with his free hand and gripped Hiccup's bottom to pull him off his feet, closer to him. Jack's mouth pulled away, trailing over skin and down Hiccup's jawline. Hiccup whimpered slightly licking his bottom lip, wishing the kiss hadn't stopped. His eyes widened before he moaned quietly as Jack's lips pressed to his neck and drew his skin into his warm mouth.

They dimly heard a small noise and a click of a door, but ignored it when it didn't forcibly interrupt them. When the loud knock on the door sounded, both were sufficiently dizzy. Hiccup actually stumbled backwards into the opposite wall before regaining his balance.

"Get out of there, you bubble-headed idiot. Onstage!" Elsa shouted through the door, laughter evident in her voice.

"Uh-oh " Jack's cheeks flushed as his eyes caught sight of a bruise-like mark on Hiccup's throat.

"What?" Hiccup glanced around bewildered. Jack tapped the side of his neck, making Hiccup frowned in confusion. "Is something wrong with your neck?"

"Not mine! Hic, yours! You have big ole hickey right there."

Hiccup flushed up to his hair line, slapping his hand over the rather large mark.

"\_Sorry\_ " Jack mumbled.

"DAMN IT, SHOWPONY, FINISH MAKING OUT LATER! ONSTAGE \_NOW\_!" Aster shouted.

"Coming, damn it " Jack dragged a hand through his hair and glanced down at the still dazed Hiccup. "I don't wanna " He whined. He reached for Hiccup again, the younger teen too baffled to react, his mind still on the perplexed idea that he \_had a hickey\_. \_What would his mother say?\_ They both jumped away as the door flung open. Aster stood at the door, eyes blazing.

"NOW!" the young man bellowed, snatching Jack by the collar of his shirt. Jack was dragged away leaving behind a bewildered Hiccup.

"We're going back out into audience, Haley. I'll see you at the end, okay?" Hiccup turned towards the blushing Emma.

"Of course " His eyes were still rather wide, his tone confused.

She laughed.

**\*\*3HJHJHJHJ3\*\***

When the band returned to the stage Jim clapped loudly with the rest of the audience, though he did not go so far as to scream himself hoarse. Dimitri grasped his hand and smiled happily at him. Jim immediately responded, a smile blooming over his features. He had texted his mother during the break and she had told him to remain until the end. She decided to closed the diner earlier unless it was actually customers sleeping over at their motel who wanted to eat. So the work load was lessened and didn't need extra help from Jim. She wanted him to enjoy. Dimitri had actually whooped when Jim told him. Now, Jim was able to stand back and enjoy without worrying about the time, so he did. Throughout the rest of the set, he and Dimitri never let go of each other's hand.

"Isn't my bro great? Emma's brother is really good, too! My brother started the band when he was sixteen and it's been great ever since its debut! Everybody loves them!" Dimitri bragged happily. Jim couldn't help but nod, not even attempting to reply out loud. Instead, he squeezed Dimitri's hand a bit. The taller boy met his gaze and a he opened his mouth, his eyes looking rather anxious. It was then that Aster's voice lifted over the crowd.

A/N: I actually composed something titled SNOW PRINCESS for this chapter but I lost it so I'm going with LET IT GO, but not the Idina version. The Nathan Smith Rock cover version. Check it out on youtube! Animation by Jess the Dragon. It's killer awesome! Although for the story's sake I altered the lyrics a bit

**\*\*\_All right, everyone, we have a new song playinfor this set, not yet released on CD! This will be the last one,\_\*\***" Aster announced through the booming speakers. A rousing answering of shouts filled the bursting warehouse. **\*\*\_It's called \_\*\*\*\*Let it Go\*\*\*\*\_ and I hope you all like it."\_\*\***

**\*\*Everyone cheered in excitement until the lights dimmed for a moment follwed by a hush from the crowd in anticipation. Then, the production crew started the music and there was a light cheering that followed. A dimly lit spotlight centering on Aster. The melody started off low key, and the young man was simply walking forward on the part of the stage that can pass off as some kind of runway for a fashion show.\*\***

**"\_Snow glows white on the mountain tonight,\_**

**\_Not a foot print to be seen.\_**

**\_And it looks like you're the Queen."\_**

At that note, Aster looked torward back stage. Then the song got more upbeat. And Aster gestured his arms firmly as if fighting the wind.

**"\_The wind is howling\_**

\_\_Like your raging storm inside\_\_

\_\_Couldn't keep it in,\_\_

\_\_I knoy you tried.\_\_

\_Won't you let me in\_

\_Why can't you see?\_

\_You don't need to hide\_

\_Who you want to be!\_

\_'Conceal or Feel'\_

\_The choice is yours~\_

\_THE CHOICE IS YOURS!"\_

The spotlight disappeared and laser lights lit up the warehouse, blinking rapidly as Aster jogged backwards to center stage where the other dancers joined him, making freestyle entrances like back flips and front flips and the like until they got into position with Jack and Aster side by side, center focus of a semi-circle by the rest of the dancers. They sang, or technically lip sync since it is difficult to dance and sing at the same time.

"\_Let it Go, Let it Go!\_

\_Don't hold it back anymore!\_

\_Let it Go, Let it Go!\_

\_Time to open yourself to a brand new door!"\_

Jack and Aster pseudo-fought, dancers in the albino's side in sync with Jack's movements, and same with Aster on his side.

\_"I don't care-!"\_

Jack swept his arm to the side in sync with the dancers at his side. And freeze.

\_"-How much you push me away!"\_

Aster did the same on his side, opposite direction from Jack's.

\_"Let the storm rage on,\_

\_I'll still follow you anyway!"\_

More free styling as the song continued to played out, telling a story.

\_"It's funny how I never thought\_

\_I'd ever feel this way.\_

\_But I won't suppress it,\_  
\_I won't let you slip away~!\_  
\_Everything I do, I do for you\_  
\_There's no limit I won't go through\_  
\_No mount too high, no hill too low\_  
\_For you I'll face any foe!"\_

Aster made a swing towards Jack, who faked a knock out, but made it out to look like a back flip, landing on both hands, flipping himself back up, jogging backwards while the other dancers were moving sideways so that now Jack was the center of the formed semi-circle and Aster took center stage.

\_"Let It Go, Let It Go!\_  
\_And we'll be one with the wind and sky\_  
\_Let It Go, Let It Go!\_  
\_Snow Princess, I will never make you cry!"\_  
\_Right here, right now\_  
\_We'll make our stand\_  
\_While the storm rages on..."\_

The crowd was going nuts, cheering like crazy as the laser lights blinked so fast, leaving flashes in everyone's eyes but they were too high to care.

\_"Love will flurry through the air\_  
\_And spread all around.\_  
\_Our soul as one spirals\_  
\_Like frozen fractals all around\_  
\_and one thought crystallizes like an icy blast\_  
\_No time for turning back,\_  
\_The past is in the past!\_  
\_So Let him Go, Let him go!\_  
\_Together now, we'll rise at the break of dawn!\_  
\_Let him go, Let him go!\_  
\_Your perfect boy is gone.\_  
\_But I'm here today\_



\_Take me as I am\_

\_Let the storm rage on~!\_

\_I'm with you now anyway..."\_

The crowd goes wild. Some are searching up if there was a way to get a copy of the song at the Easter Manuveur's official fansite.

"That was gorgeous." Jim smiled appreciatively. Dimitri glanced at him.

"Eh? Are you crushing on my brother?" Dimitri exclaimed outraged, a smile tugging at his mouth.

"Nope." Jim snickered behind his hand. He glanced back up at the stage where Aster and Jack were sharing a high-five. "The performance was great. I didn't mean the dancers were gorgeous though I guess some of them are." The younger male thoughtfully eyed them. Male Members of the Easter Manuveurs were definitely good-looking. They made as great performing band as much as they made an aesthetically pleasing one.

Dimitri laughed.

"Let's just go." He tightened his grip on Jim's hand and dragged him away from the sobbing and screaming crowd. At least four people were following close behind them.

"Where are we going?" Jim asked, frowning slightly in confusion.

"To see my brother and the rest of the Manuveurs, of course. You're not allowed to meet them without me ever. The guy members will eat you alive!" Jim snickered again at Dimitri's possessive tone.

"Sure~ like I can make guys gay by just showing up. I know you're just kidding around now." Jim laughed.

"That's what you think," Dimitri muttered.

\*\*3HJHJHJHJ3\*\*

Emma and Eret were both pushing through the crowd to get to the back door again. Just ahead of them, Dimitri was leading Jim by the hand while the younger boy laughed. As they neared the piercingly loud crowd of, mostly, girls outside the backstage door, Emma's eyes widened. She held her breath as she passed Jami, as if trying to hide her single presence among so many.

"Emma! Hey, Overland girl!"

"Astrid?" Emma turned to see a happily waving Astrid.

"I was going to go backstage, too, but my mom called saying I need to get home early. Call me, okay?"

"All right!" Emma waved and smiled. It never struck her that Jamie standing so near her was anything but a coincidence.

Eret's hand touched her shoulder and she looked up. "Do you know

Hofferson well?"

"Astrid? We're good friends. I met her just before I met you." Her smile faded seeing his dark frown. "Eret? Do you know her as well?"

"Yeah. In a way." His voice was sharp.

"All right." She clasped his hand reassuringly and smiled softly. "I'm sure you'll like my \_brother\_ and Aster, and Haley, too. They're really great," she told him gracefully changing the subject. His shoulders relaxed and he smiled back.

"They do act like it. I'm sure I'll like them very much."

Emma bit her lip and forced herself not to look back and see \_him\_, just one last time. Her pride won out and she led Eret towards the back door. Her decision may or may not have been a good thing, for if she had turned back, she would have seen her '\_good friend\_' planting an exuberant kiss on her ex-boyfriend's mouth.

\*\*3HJHJHJHJ3\*\*

Elsa laughed and handed out water bottles again to the excited group of teenage and slightly older boys. They thanked her and punched each other lightly.

"That was great! Those girls at the front loved that last song!" Johnny crowed.

"It was a really good idea to sing it, Aster," Guy agreed.

"I thought so." Aster's I'm-so-effing-cool smirk graced his face. He wiped away the sweat from his forehead and looked over his shoulder. His smirk got wider as Hiccup hovered anxiously around the pale but lively Jack.

"It was really good," Elsa complimented him as she handed him the last bottle. "Did you write it, or Jack?"

"I did, actually." Aster reached out and wrapped his hand around hers. The thin plastic bottle crackled beneath her palm. She looked up at his spring green eyes in surprise. "It's not quite right, though. It's lacking something it's too short, for one, and too broken. I need some help completing it."

"O-Oh " Her voice came out as a low sigh. The condensation on the bottle slipped between her fingers and ran down her wrist. She ignored the chilling, tickling feeling. His face was getting closer and her eyes couldn't lift from his.

"I was wondering when when you're free."

"Free?" Her eyes grew dark with confusion. He sighed and tried again.

"I want to go out with you, Elsa Arendelle." He bent down and put his lips close to her ear. "\_Let It Go, Let It Go! Snow Princess, I will never make you cry! Right here, right now We'll make our stand\_\_

"\_

Elsa's eyes widened and she gasped.

\_Snow Princess... all the snow references did he really ?\_ Her wide ice blue eyes met his and he smiled, a real one, not a smirk.

"You can't be that slow, sheila."

"ASTER!" Elsa laughed and flung her arms around him. "You're so rude!" She laughed harder and barely held back her tears. \_I'm I'm going to be happy! He he's mine and I'm his. I'll be happy at last.\_ Her fingers dug into his shoulders and she bit down on her lip. His arms wrapped around her waist.

"I promise no matter what, I'll do my very best to make you happy, Elsa," he whispered. Shock rippled through her as his words echoed her thoughts.

"I I know," she whispered back. "I'll I'll try my best to do the same, Aster."

Her voice whispering his name without any reservations or distance made his arms tightened more around her. \_I I never thought I'd want somebody so much, \_Aster thought.

"Aster!" He jumped in surprise as his brother's voice broke through the bubble around the two.

"Dimitri!" Aster yelped. He released the heavily flushing Elsa and turned. "Hey, how'd you like the concert?"

"It's been great. And uh I was wondering if you'd like to meet Jim?" Dimitri offered, grinning as he hugged his brother and stepped back.

Aster blinked. "Eh? Oh, that's right, your close friend." he remembered.

"Actually, he's more than just a friend." Dimitri stepped to the side and nudged a slightly younger and shorter boy forward. He placed his hands on the boy's shoulders and blushed. "We're we're dating, \_bro\_." His eyes looked up into Aster's gaze.

"Oh " Aster blankly stared at his younger brother. Elsa's hand touched his elbow and he looked down at her. She raised one eyebrow and her lips quirked upwards.

"You're staring, Aster. Aren't you going to meet his Jimmy?"

"Oh right " He shook his head. "Thanks, Elsa." He turned back to the two boys and glanced at the shorter of the two. Light, baby blue eyes looked up into his blandly. His small mouth was in a straight, firm line and his hair was tied back in a thin pony tail with front bangs framing his face. "Nice to meet you, Jimmy."

"It's... Jim, actually. Not Jimmy." the young teen interjected with a sigh. "Common mistake."

Aster smirked. "I'm glad to finally meet you. I always wondered if my little bro was sexless or something. Then, that Overland girl popped

up and I thought my baby bro was a bastard. I'm very glad he's gay, instead."

"ASTER!" Dimitri exclaimed red in the face.

Emma and Jim snickered behind their hands.

"That last song was great, Aster." Emma smiled. He rubbed her head vigorously as she protested loudly.

"Thanks, Overland girl. Your big brother is over there getting treated by his boyfriend again."

"Thank you." Emma lifted her nose up in the air and stomped away, a pretty boy with ripped muscles right behind her. Elsa sadly watched her walk away.

"Did she ignore you on purpose?" Aster asked, startled. Elsa nodded.

"She holds grudges longer than Jack and Haley," Elsa explained. "She hasn't forgiven me for my inference. She cares a lot about her brother."

"I'm sure she'll come around sooner or later." Aster hugged her waist.

"Elsa!"

Elsa looked towards the door. Anna had burst in, holding tightly onto Kristoff's wrist. "Sorry we're late! Kris got lost trying to find the restrooms."

Kristoff blushed and scratched his nose. "There were just so many people, I couldn't see around me." Kristoff replied sheepishly. Anna fondly patted his arm.

"Anyway, I decided to treat everybody to dinner at the Pizza place. I called ahead and ordered a reservations, lots of pizza and drinks and it'll be ready by the time we get there."

"ALL RIGHT!" The group of Dancers tackled the poor brunette. She disappeared under the five sweaty, tall bodies of the college students and the one high schooler. Anna's muffled laughter was barely heard.

And if it wasn't for Aster, Elsa would've freaked.

**\*\*Author's Notes: I hope you all like it!\*\***

## 16. My Guardian Birthday

**\*\*Author's Notes: I'm sorry this is so short. But I felt like updating... NO MORE CANCER. Hahahaha so let this mark my cancer-free days.\*\***

**\*\*My Guardian\*\***

**\*\*Chapter Sixteen\*\***

**\*\*My Guardian Birthday\*\***

His breath came out in a cloud of white vapor. His lips were chapped and red with cold and his nose was almost glowing. His lips curved into a smile. A tall form was waving frantically just down the street. His pace quickened and he rushed forward.

"Sorry to keep you!" His voice called out through the heavy silence.

"You're not \_that \_late."

Green eyes looked up as he reached his destination. Clouds were getting darker and thicker in the sky. The temperature was slowly getting colder and colder and the news had been warning the populace about the chance of snow.

"Yes, I know, but just five minutes means five minutes of freezing for you," Hiccup stated apologetically.

"Hey, no worries, \_Hic\_. I like the cold." Winter blue eyes glowed warmly as his arm wrapped around Hiccup's shoulders. "Let's go gift searching now, 'kay."

Hiccup nodded and let Jack lead him towards the shopping district. "This is silly, Jack. I truly don't need a gift. I can wait until Christmas."

"But I have to get you a Christmas present, too. And Hic, hello, sure Halloween is over but it's technically still Autumn." Jack pouted.

Hiccup sighed. "It can be Winter all-year round, as far as I'm concerned. There's always some snow. There's only ever rain at summer here at Burgess, anyway." He shuddered as a cold finger of wind managed to slip underneath his scarf.

Jack quickly pulled up the scarf and tightened it.

"You shouldn't have come, Hic. You're going to get sick!"

"Stop worrying, Snowflake. I'll be fine. I couldn't let you go into this without me. You'll have no idea what to get me," Hiccup pointed out in a firm voice. "I don't want you buying something I'll have little interest in or already own. I dislike feeling guilty."

"That's true." Jack laughed. He pulled Hiccup up against his closer and kissed his temple with cold lips. "Let's get into that mall and out of the cold."

"That is an awesome idea," Hiccup gratefully agreed. They pushed through the doors.

Warm air immediately blew into their faces. It took a moment before the bite of de-numbing subsided. They sighed gratefully and peeled off gloves and un-buttoned their jackets.

"If we stay here too long, we'll end up being too hot," Jack

joked.

"Then, we should hurry." Hiccup tucked his gloves into his pocket and started forward. Jack's still-cold hand reached forward and grasped his.

"Aren't you excited about your birthday at all?" Jack asked with his eyebrows drawn low.

Hiccup blinked. "Not excited no. I like my birthday but I'm already away from home and no longer a child. I'm not going to get a cake and a party with my parents and presents.".

"Well, I'm gonna change that! I'll make it so that you'll look forward to it every year!"

Hiccup chuckled. "Let's just find a present, eh?" He suggested.

Jack nodded and lets Hiccup lead him through the mall.

They ended up having a lot of fun, laughing and pointing at the crazy things they saw. Hiccup even got so surprised seeing a cosplaying teenage girl walk by that he accidentally bit into a too-hot slice of pizza and burned his mouth.

"She wasn't that bad!" Jack laughed.

"She was half-naked! Who in Burgess does that?!" Hiccup protested, pressing a cube of ice against his lip.

Jack pulled his hand away and kissed his mouth lightly. "There, any better?"

"Not really, but I'll pretend like that helped." Hiccup smiled. Jack smiled gently back. Their hands shifted and their fingers entwined.

"So did you see anything you wanted?"

"Nothing captured my attention. I wouldn't mind a book, though."

"A book? For school or for you?"

"For me, I promise."

"I guess it's okay then." Jack stood up and grabbed their empty cardboard plates and cups. "I'll go toss these and be right back."

Hiccup watched him walk away and set his chin on his palm. A few young girls rushed up and bombarded him at the trash cans with hands full of pens and paper. After his debut at the first concert of the school year, Jack had become almost as famous as Aster.

The more concerts he starred in, the more popular he came, and the more the question popped up of "Who's your boyfriend?" Everybody already knew about Elsa and Aster and she had even been asked questions by the University paper. Nobody, however, had even seen Hiccup. He wanted it to stay that way. He didn't need people prying into his life and asking him personal questions. He liked being

anonymous and unknown to the public.

"Hey, sorry about that, Hic. I didn't realize I was so recognizable," Jack apologized. "We should get out of here before they see you."

Hiccup raised an eyebrow and eyed his taller boyfriend. His bruises and scars were gone and well faded, they could easily see his face. How could he not be recognizable? He was completely unforgettable, especially after seeing him onstage. A small part of him wanted everybody to know exactly who Jack's boyfriend was, but it was a very small, vain part. Hiccup made a point to not listen to his vanity.

"Let's go to the bookstore and head home," Hiccup offered, glancing around to make sure those girls had gone.

"We're going to my house, right?"

"Yeah, that was the original plan," Hiccup concurred as they walked towards the nearest bookstore outlet.

Jack grinned happily.

**\*\*3HJHJHJHJ3\*\***

Inside the diner kitchen, Jim sighed and wiped the sweat away from his forehead. He just finally finished his pile of dishes and Ben was just currently setting orders down to a tray to bring out.

"I'll be honest, it's been a lot easier here with you around, Ben." Sarah smiled at the bespectacled boy

Jim agreed. "Yeah, we can never thank you enough, dude."

Ben blushes, but returned the smile easily. Jim had to smile, too, glad Ben was being more comfortable around other people. The job was really helping him just as much as he was helping them.

Suddenly, Jim's phone rang. It was fairly new, Dimitri had gotten it for him as his first monthsary present. Jim brought it out, and saw the caller ID.

"Uh... mom..?"

Sarah smiled knowingly at her son. "It's Mr. Hot-and-sexy I presume?"

"M-mom, jeez!" Jim blushed heatedly. "Is that what you really think of him?"

Sarah laughed. "No, but I'm pretty sure it's what YOU think of him," she winked.

Jim grumbled, embarrassed. "I'm gonna take this, be right back." he head for the stairs that led upstairs to where his room was. "Yeah, hey Dimwit. I'm working... yeah, I think I can see you after my lunch shift... no, we close at around three, remember, to prepare for the dinner shift..."

Sarah went out of the kitchen to deliver the order Ben prepared.

Ben listened until Jim's voice got farther and farther until it was no longer heard. His shoulders slumped. At the silence, his sigh escaped him once again. Lightly, he lifted his hand and touched his chest. It still hurt him inside. Jim and hr were becoming good friends as the days progressed, but he still couldn't help but love him.

No matter how many times he saw him with Dimitri, or how many times he told himself to give up, he still loved him. Bem smiled automatically when Jim returned and smiled his way.

"So, what's the next order we need to cook up?"

One day Maybe Ben could just love Jim as a friend, but for now, he'd love him silently.

\*\*3HJHJHJHJ3\*\*

Jack opened the door and let Hiccup precede him inside.

"It's quiet in here." Hiccup's voice seemed to echo through the dark apartment.

"Yeah, my parents are downtown for the day and Emma is at Eret's."

"Oh " Hiccup trailed off, feeling nervousness fill him. He clutched his book against his chest and slipped out of his shoes. He squeaked when a hand covered his eyes.

"Hey, calm down, it's only me. Now, just follow my lead " Hiccup and Jack made their way awkwardly down the hallway. Hiccup felt a slight nudge and he turned. "Keep your eyes closed, 'kay?" The brunette closed his eyes and Jack drew away.

A small, almost silent, snap sounded and Hiccup moved his head towards the noise.

"No peeking!"

"I am not peeking!"

Hands grasped his and pulled him forward.

"Okay, open up."

Hiccup's eyes fluttered open and a smile slowly formed over his face.

A small, circular mocha cake was sitting on the kitchen table top. It had white frosting and a single candle in the very middle. \_For My Hic\_ was in candy letters on the top.

"Jack thank you."

"No problem. My mom didn't bake it, and I only helped, so you won't be poisoned. Emma is really good at baking \_real\_ sweets," Jack informed him, as he pulled back a chair.



"How about we have some cake?" Hiccup suggested.

Jack grinned. "I'll get some milk. Hold on a moment! You have to make a wish!"

Hiccup walked forward closed his eyes. Jack's hands fell unto his shoulders and he felt his mouth smile wider. \_I wish I wish I wish to be with Jack for as long as I live.\_

He opened his eyes and looked down at the single flickering candle. The glow was dancing to and fro, pushing against the shadows surrounding it, the dark greedy fingers trying to dispel that which made darkness weak. Hiccup pursed his lips and let the darkness win this time. A thin trail of pale, grey smoke wavered in the air. Jack leaned over and kissed behind his ear softly. A shiver raced down Hiccup's spine, goosebumps rising on his skin in response. He was suddenly aware again of the empty, dark apartment around them. Jack moved away to switch the lights back on and grab cups and plates, apparently blissfully aware of how uncomfortable Hiccup was becoming. The auburnette quickly pushed it to the back of his mind, mentally berating himself. There really wasn't a reason for it. He smiled when Jack returned, taking the cake knife. Hiccup cut the small cake and placed the slices on each plate. They tapped their cups of milk together.

"Happy birthday!"

"I'm finally fifteen years old."

Jack set down his cup of milk. "That's so weird."

"What is weird?" Hiccup asked before eating a forkful of cake.

"You're only fifteen and you're a freshman in college!" Jack exclaimed, throwing up his hands.

"That's still weird to you? We've been dating for months," Hiccup reminded him dryly.

"Yeah I know. You just act so much older than you are. You act older than me," Jack mumbled, stabbing his cake and leaning on his elbow.

"Yeah, well, what's weirder is that I finally have friends to celebrate my friends with, this is actually the first birthday I celebrated with someone beyond my family." Hiccup took another bite of cake. "This is really good."

"See Am I or am I not the best birthday party planner?"

Hiccup chuckled. "Let's not get carried away," he said. Then he smiled at the older boy warmly, taking his hands. "Thank you, Jack. Normally, I never made a big deal of my birthday when I was younger. But I really appreciate this."

For a moment, an expression passed Jack's features. But Hiccup couldn't place it. Then, Jack smiled again. "Anytime, Hic."

"Jack," Hiccup frowned. "What's wrong?"

Jack blinked. "What makes you think something's wrong?"

"Come on Jack, I saw the way your face changed for a moment there." Hiccup held Jack's face between his hands.

"It... It's a bit... it's personal..."

"Then tell me, talk to me. After ten years, we're finally together. And I'd really like to make up for those wasted years, not holding you, not knowing you. I mean, doesn't it bother you that I have to come with you to shop for my birthday gift just to know what I might like?"

Jack sighed, raising his own hands to hold the ones caressing his face. "Just... what you said about not making a big deal of birthdays when you were younger... I... I never had a childhood birthday party experience..."

The auburnette blinked, not expecting that. "Why not?" Hiccup dropped his hands from Jack's face, but they kept them locked.

"Well... even before my real parents died, we were always poor, see? So we never had enough to go by for even a special dinner." Jack pressed his forehead against Hiccup's. "When we first met, at the park and we were having a picnic... Well, I won a small snow boarding competition. Cash prize. So we made a day about it. But aside from that..."

Hiccup squeezed Jack's hand in silent comfort.

"But... the odd thing is, there always seemed to be money enough when it was Emma's birthday. There was a period that I resented her for it. But I got over it," Jack continued. "And I thought, maybe it's cause she's younger. It was fine, I still got cake too. Then... then I found out." Jack choked.

Hiccup was afraid to ask. But he did anyway, because Jack was expecting it. "What did you find out?"

"My parents... my real parents... It was very hard for them to celebrate my-" Jack paused, trying to take calming breaths. "-They couldn't celebrate my birthday because... because it wasn't JUST my birthday alone..." he couldn't say it directly, what he means.

It was very vague, what Jack was saying. But Hiccup wasn't a genius for nothing. He put the pieces together in a few seconds.

"Do... do you mean... Jack, did you have... A twin?"

Jack chuckled, but it was strained. "Wow. You are smart," he managed. "But yeah... Exactly... just... he... he was taken. K-kidnapped the day we were both born. No matter what th-the police did, they couldn't... they just couldn't find him..." his shoulders were shaking now. "Can you believe it, Hic? I had a twin brother. Think of all the fun we could've had, the pranks we could've pulled! We could've both been overbearing, protective brothers when it came to Emma!"

Hiccup wrapped the now crying boy in his arms, feeling guilty. "I I shouldn't have forced you to tell me. I'm so stupid."

Jack shook his head and wrapped his arms around Hiccup's waist. "No. I needed to tell you, Hiccup. You're right, we barely know each other. It's hard to talk about, I only found out when Aunt Thiana and Uncle North took us in... And Thiana told me everything." Jack managed a smile. "Heh, they gave me a birthday party the year they adopted me, y'know, trying to change something that made me feel bad to a good one..."

"That's nice." Hiccup said needlessly. But what else could he say?

They were both silent for a while.

"Jack?" Hiccup broke the silence at last. "I love you."

Jack blushed, but he managed a laugh. A real one. "I love you, too." he brought their lips together.

"... love you..." Hiccup breathed when they broke for breath. "... I love you soo much, snowflake."

Jack held Hiccup closer to him, never wanting to let go. "Happy birthday, my Hic."

Then, Hiccup was lifted away from the table's edge and carried towards the living room. The couch curved beneath his weight and the auburnette shifted so that his legs were on either side of Jack's hips. They pulled away for breath and Hiccup reached up to brushed away Jack's unruly bangs.

"I'm so glad I found you again. I'm so lucky." Hiccup smiled.

Jack grinned that big silly grin full of teeth and mischief. "You're damn skippy you're lucky."

Hiccup laughed and pulled Jack back down to continue where they had left off.

**\*\*3HJHJHJHJ3\*\***

Elsa lets herself into the apartment and unwrapped her scarf. She pets Hiccup's pet dog on the way in, who gladly lapped at her.

"Jack, Hale?"

"No! It's Elsa!" she called back. Toothless picks up his fish chew toy and goes to Hiccup's room.

"Hey!" Aster popped out of the kitchen and grinned. "Did you see the other two?"

"No. I was hoping to, though. I got Haley a gift." She lifted up a small purple bag. She stepped out of her shoes and unzipped her jacket. "I think it's going to snow soon. The sky was really dark." She walked towards Aster with her jacket slung over her arm.

"Here, give me that, princess" Aster took her jacket and hung it in the closet.

"Where's Cristoff? Isn't my sister here with him?"

"Oh, they just left for lunch. They'll be back for dinner. Hale doesn't realize we're throwing him a surprise party. Therefore, it's still a surprise."

Elsa grinned and set her bag on the sideboard. "I think Jack had a surprise for Haley. Maybe we should call one of their cells and ask when they expect to be back," she mused. She blushed as Aster wrapped an arm around her waist and pulled her up against him. She glanced up and smiled shyly. "You need to stop surprising me like that!" Elsa objected playfully. She braced her hand against his chest and leaned back.

"It's fun watching you blush like that. You almost never lose your cool unless I surprise you."

Elsa quipped. "I'm am a snow Princess."

"That you are. And a beautiful one at that."

Elsa laughed. She blushed again as his hand cupped her cheek. "Aster?"

"Yeah?" His mouth was moving closer to her.

"Why'd you choose me? I'm younger than you and angry all the time and almost violent."

"I dunno, I just can't keep my eyes off you," Aster replied with a shrug.

"Aster!" She gave up, laughing, and leaned forward to meet his lips.

**\*\*3HJHJHJHJ3\*\***

Dimitri grinned and waved as soon as he saw his official boyfriend around the corner.

They finally got around to telling Sarah, Jim's mom, about them a month ago. Granted, she wasn't thrilled about not being able to have gran kids. She questioned her son if Jim wasn't just looking for a family man stand in since he never knew his father. But Jim protested that it wasn't just that. It took a few weeks, a couple arguments, but Sarah is warming up to the idea.

Especially when Dimitri got her a pretty locket for her birthday recently.

Jim waved back. Dimitri lowered his hand back into his pocket and waited patiently for him to reach him. He glanced down at his old sneakers and scuffed at the ice-hard snow. The guilt that had been filling him previously returned as soon as he glanced down.

He still hadn't told his parents.

He had tried, very hard. But it just wouldn't come out. He would see his mother looking at him with a big smile, so glad her handsome, young son finally had a girlfriend, and he would lose his nerve. When he visits his father for tea along with Aster, he would talk about how he always wanted to have a daughter and hope both his sons' first child would be a girl.

Also, he had tried six times that morning to bring up Jim into the conversation, but each time, he could only get out his name until his mom finally left for work.

Maybe I should try it on my birthday? Dimitri thought with a wry smile.

"Hey Dimitri? You with me?" Jim asked in concern as he stood in front of Dimitri without the older boy even looking up.

Dimitri jumped and waved his hands out in front of him. "I-I'm okay! I was just thinking!" he demurred quickly, laughing awkwardly.

"You haven't told them yet, have you?" Jim figured out shrewdly.

Dimitri glanced away with a blush. "I tried but they keep going on about how they can't wait to meet this cute girl I've finally fell for. Dad wants a granddaughter. Aster would probably have that covered though more than I could but... He even said he'd 'fancy to meet' my girlfriend. Can you believe that? He said fancy to and he didn't even go to a European country with me!" Dimitri sighed and dragged his gloved-hand through his hair. Well, tried to- his baret got in the way. He looked down sharply as a hand clasped his own.

"It's all right. I'll wait. It's enough to know you're trying. It must be hard to think you might be disappointing your parents, who loves you very much. I know my mother was upset that she won't have a chance to get her hopes up for a cute daughter-in-law," Jim reassured him, smiling.

Dimitri grinned, relieved. "You're the best, Jimbo!" he wrapped his arms around his slightly shorter boyfriend and spun him around.

"Will you stop calling me that, then?" Jim exclaimed as he quickly grabbed Dimitri's shoulders.

"NOPE!"

Jim let his head fall to Dimitri's shoulder and sighed against his lover's neck in defeat. Dimitri chuckled and snuggled Jim closer.

**\*\*3HJHJHJHJ3\*\***

At least an hour later, they both left the apartment. Their cheeks were flushed and their eyes rather dark and hazy. Jack locked the door, turning to meet Hiccup's gaze, both smiling. Seeing Hiccup's tousled auburn hair and bruised lips made that familiar kick of want burn in his belly, only burning hotter that the answering heat in Hiccup's darkened gaze. Jack's hand fell to his side, his keys dangling from his fingers.

"Gawd, we're never going to make it back. They're going to kill me," Jack sighed, dragging his hand to his hair.

Hiccup's eyebrows rose. "I told them we'd be a while before we left."

"Yeah um I promised to get you back for dinner. I think Aster wanted to make something nice."

"Ah, yes, the surprise party I did not let you cancel." Hiccup looked a little ashamed, then glanced up. "One more."

"Sure thing." They eagerly reached for one another again. When Jack began fumbled with the doorknob to get them back inside, they barely managed regained their senses.

"We better stop now."

"Yeah." Jack laid his forehead against Hiccup's and sighed. "Okay, let's go."

They walked down the stairs and started to walk quickly towards the park. Hiccup blinked as something soft fell on his eyelash. He looked towards the sky, slowly smiling.

"Jack "

Jack looked back and his eyes widened. Snow was falling around Hiccup like petals. They clung to his hair and lashes, dusting him all over as if with feathers. The weak sunlight on the snowflakes made it look as though the birthday boy glittered. His small, still kissed-bruised lips were smiling and feathered in snowflakes. Jack had always loved snow days, but now he loved them more.

"It's snowing."

"Yeah " He kissed a snowflake off the corner of Hiccup's mouth and grinned once more. "Come on, my pretty, we're late."

"What did you call me?"

Jack laughed and tugged him along through the falling snow.

**\*\*Author's Note: I apologize once more for the shortness. So anyway, review please?\*\***

## 17. My Guardian Cold

**\*\*My Guardian\*\***

**\*\*Chapter Sixteen\*\***

**\*\*My Guardian Cold\*\***

Emma stared through the thick pane of glass. She giggled when the small puppy barked and placed his paws up on the glass. Both of their breaths fogged the window and it soon became hard to see the small,

curly-haired puppy wagging his tail so excitedly. As she moved away the puppy barked rapidly, wanting her to come back. She smiled and waved at the small puppy as she walked away.

"I wish I could have a puppy," Emma said with a sigh.

Eret looked down at her. "Don't you live in an apartment?" he asked, incredulous.

"That is one of the many reasons why I can't have one." Emma laughed. "And my brother is a pet on his own."

Eret smiled with her. "Where did you want to go for Christmas shopping?" he inquired, reminding her of why they were wandering through downtown Burgess in the first place.

"I guess that store, over there! They have good deals in there. I don't have a lot of allowance, so I'll have to be a bit stingy." Emma led him towards the \_holeâ€"inâ€"theâ€"wall\_ curio shop.

They walked into the warm shop and exhaled in relief. It had gotten so cold outside, even wearing warm winter jackets didn't insulate them completely. After a few moments of loosening buttons and zippers and enjoying the heat, Emma led Eret through the shop and browsed the shelves carefully. He watched her for a few minutes, as she scrutinized each item carefully, checking the prices and muttering under breath.

"Have have you always been rather tight with money?" Eret asked slowly.

Emma looked over to see his shameâ€"flushed face, blinking rather absently, wrapped in her calculations. "Yes, always," she answered with a reassuring smile as she came back to earth. "Don't worry; I'm not angry about the question. I'm used to it. We've never been \_poor\_, really, but we've had to do without the niceties quite a few times."

"I'm glad my mother had hired you to tutor me. I'm happy that I can help even in the smallest way." Eret mumbled, glancing at the bricâ€"aâ€"brac, his cheeks still dusted pink.

"It was a big help. Not small at all." Her smile was sweet.

"Have you spoken to him in a while?" His voice was quiet as he awkwardly examined a glass candlestick.

She kept her eyes focused on the vanilla-scented, angelâ€"shaped candle. "Not really. Just a few words to clear the air. We haven't spoken since school ended, though."

"I don't I didn't mean to pry. I'm not used to dating."

"It's all right, really. I understand." Her hand touched his shoulder and he turned to see her smile. "I know what it's like to start a relationship, how scary it is for the first time. You're doing just fine." Her woolen glove touched his cheek and he smiled back.

"So what're you thinking of getting for your mother?"

"What about this candle? My mother loves vanilla and the angel is really cute."

"If you get this dish to set it on, it will have a better presentation. What do you think?"

Emma eyed the shallow, gold-colored, plaster dish and set the angel candle on it. The gold trim on the angel's sleeves and wings matched the dish perfectly.

"You're right, it is perfect! Time for Jack, now!"

**\*\*3HJHJHJHJ3\*\***

"What do you think, you wanna go?" Astrid asked through the receiver.

"I don't know Haley very well, Astrid." answered Jamie's voice. "I wouldn't want to intrude."

"Oh, come on. He remembers you. He's been saying how much he wants to thank you again for warning him back in August," Astrid wheedled, crossing her fingers.

"Not like it did a crap load of good. Jack still got beat up," Jamie grumbled.

"Speaking of Jack, he's been saying how he'd like to see you again. Hale told me that Jack said he really missed you." Astrid smirked evilly as she finished.

"Really?" Jamie squeaked.

Astrid would bet her last penny he was blushing, too. He did have that little man-crush on the guy.

"So, you wanna go? It's for \_Christmas\_, Jay! I want to show you off to my friend Emma, too!" Astrid continued on, relentlessly pressing her advantage.

Jamie blanched on his side of the phone.

"Eret has nothing on you, really! I can't believe she's dating \_him\_. Of all the people, what a stuck-up ass!" Eret, I mean. Can you believe how rude he is? Mr. \_I'm-so-cool\_, grrrrr."

Jamie let her continue ranting about how rude and obnoxious Eret was and lay back on his pillow. He closed his eyes and took a deep breath. \_Emma...\_ Astrid has to know soon, anyway. They must not have really talked about me or else we probably wouldn't be going to the damn Christmas party. But I have missed Jack and it \_is\_ Christmas.\_

"So, are you going to come?"

"Yeah, sure." Jamie replied, trying to inflect \_some\_ excitement. Astrid grinned on her side, and then squealed aloud.

"ALL RIGHT!"



**\*\*3HJHJHJHJ3\*\***

The TV clicked and the screen became black. Jack dropped the remote onto the couch next to him and glanced down. His mouth curved into a soft smile before he lifted his hand and brushed darkâ€"red hair off Hiccup's forehead. The smaller teen shifted slightly, cuddling closer to Jack's warmth, still fast asleep. Jack kissed the top of Hiccup's head and rubbed his cheek against his thick hair, just enjoying the moment. There hadn't been a lot of time for this the past fall semester. The front door opened and closed, a waft of cold air streaming through the apartment. Aster and Elsa's voices drifted into the living room from the foyer. Probably arguing about paying for cab fare or holding her elbow when they stepped over ice. Jack rolled his eyes as his two incorrigible friends entered the room.

"Hello, Jack, Haleâ€"oh, is he asleep?" Elsa broke off, instantly lowering her voice as she peered closer.

"N-no I'm awake." Hiccup woke with a long yawn, stretching his spine as he sat up.

"I'm sorry for waking you," Elsa said with a selfâ€"directed grimace.

"We didn't realize you'd be sleeping in the middle of the day, Hale," Aster teased, smirking down at the blearily blinking auburnette.

"It isn't a problem. I shouldn't have fallen asleep," Hiccup replied amiably. He glanced towards the TV and blinked. "What happened to the movie?"

"You fell asleep, so I decided to take a nap with you." Jack grinned. "Elsa woke you up just after I turned off the TV."

"I didn't realize, sorry. But since you're awake, I wanted to show you guys all the stuff Aster and I bought." Elsa explained lifting up a bulging plastic bag.

"Plus, Hale is our cook, and we wanted to make sure we got it all," Aster added as he walked past with a large armful of bags as well.

"Anna and Cristoff are going to be here soon with all the decorations and that table she promised us," Elsa tacked on, shifting her grip on the bags.

"It's a good thing I woke up then." Hiccup rose from the couch and stretched his arms his over his head. "I'm going to really hate going back to school. I'm getting used to napping whenever I'm sleepy." The others laughed and walked into the kitchen to begin setting up for the party.

"Damn it!" Aster exclaimed moments later. The three other teenagers turned towards the pony-tailed dancer kneeling in front of the fridge. "I could've sworn we had eggs!"

"I ate the last two this morning," Hiccup said with a frown. "Did you not check and make sure?"

Aster blushed. "We usually always have eggs," he mumbled as Elsa and Jack snickered.

"I waited to buy more because I figured we would buy some for the party. You're going to have to go back out and get some," Hiccup told him firmly.

Aster glared at Elsa and Jack as their snickers become full laughter.

"I can't do that," Aster said after looking back at Hiccup. "You guys need all the help you can get cooking. Besides, Anna and Cris will be here soon and I promised to clean up the living room for them."

"I'll go. I'm not doing anything." Jack offered between gasps for breath.

"Are you sure? This really isn't very funny, you two,"

Hiccup burst out laughing again. He barely managed to pull himself back together as Aster scowled and Hiccup attempted to keep his foot from bouncing irritably.

"No problem! I'll just run over to Astrid's!" Jack grinned.

Hiccup handed over his wallet, which Jack snagged, swooped down and kissed his cheek, and then left the kitchen, still laughing.

**\*\*3HJHJHJHJ3\*\***

Astrid sipped at her steaming cup of mocha latte. Her fingers were blessedly burning as she wrapped them around the thin cardboard cup. Across the small table at the caf  , Emma was drinking her own macchiato, humming cheerfully. She had finished her shopping and bought really good present for everyone on her list and she still had a little cash to burn with her friend. It really was a good day today, even if it was cold.

"I finally convinced him to come with me to the party, so you'll finally meet my boyfriend!" Astrid told Emma excitedly.

"I can't wait. He seems really nice. What was his name again?" Emma frowned as she tried to remember. Surely she'd heard Astrid say it countless times.

"Oh, you can just call him Jay. He's real laidback, so I'm sure he wouldn't mind." Astrid sipped at her mocha latte and missed the sudden, frozen look of pain that crossed Emma's face.

"Jay?" Her voice was remarkably steady and she mentally congratulated herself. It was just a name after all. Astrid nodded with a huge grin, gulping down her drink.

\_I never told called him Jay in front of her, only Jamie. She has no idea that \_that\_ nickname is my ex-boyfriend's, \_\_Emma\_ told herself firmly.

"So how are you and that jerk-off?" Astrid winced. "Sorry, I did it

again. It's just so natural to me " She smiled apologetically.

"It's all right I think. Just don't call him a jerk-off near him. I don't want him to get offended," Emma pleaded lightly, wondering if \_she\_ should be offended or laugh.

"I call him a jerkâ€"off at school all the time. We always seem to find a way to argue." Astrid's face darkened significantly as she scowled. "He's so aggravating to argue with. I get so loud and angry and he just stands there smirking and looking down on me all calm and quietâ€"GGGRRRâ€"YOW!" Astrid quickly jerked her hands away from her cup. Hot brown coffee and milk had spilled out the top when she squeezed it too hard. It was all over her fingers and the table and even on her jeans. She cursed under her breath, sucking at her fingers. Emma laughed and handed her napkins.

"I should be angry with you, but it's hilarious to me how angry you two get with each other. How did it happen?" Emma asked as she mopped up the latte puddles all over the table.

"I don't like talking about it," Astrid growled while she scrubbed at her hands.

"That's exactly what he says. Why can't one of you just get over it and tell me?" Emma teased. Astrid stuck out her tongue and began to laugh as well.

\_I'm glad I have such a cool girl friend. I haven't had a girl friend before. I usually hang out with boys. I'd be so sad if I ever lost contact with Emma. She really knows how to balance me out\_, Astrid thought happily.

"So how do you like that macchiato?" Astrid brought up everâ€"soâ€"casually.

"I really like it. Thanks for suggesting this place to hang out. It's great!" Emma exclaimed, taking another gulp of her drink.

"I'm happy you like it. Give it here."

"Eh?" Emma protested, half-laughing as Astrid wiggled her fingers at her.

"Give it here. I just lost half my mocha latte and It was your boyfriend's fault. So, hand it over, sister," Astrid ordered.

"I'm not going to give you my macchiato, Astrid!" Emma objected, pulling the macchiato away to a safer distance.

"Oh, yes, you will!" Astrid lunged for it.

And so a brief war over a macchiato was startedâ€" to the consternation of everyone else in the coffee shop. Enma let herself be defeated when her laughter finally weakened her. Astrid settled back in her chair, sipping the hardâ€"won macchiato, grinning smugly. Emma shook her head and reached for the mostly wasted mocha latte and sipped at it. It was pretty good. Maybe she'd order this next time. She looked to Astrid and lowered her cup.

"How are you and your boyfriend?" Emma asked, trying to be curious.

\_Your boyfriend named Jay.\_

"Really good! He's still really beat up over his last relationship, though." Her eyes grew sad as she sipped her stolen macchiato. "I I told him I loved him, and I know it made him happy, but he doesn't love me not yet." Her eyes flamed as, once again, her mood swung erratically. "He will! I'm really good for him! We fight all the time and I keep him emotional! When I found him, he almost got pneumonia because he just didn't \_care\_. He's meant to be all emotion! You can tell by his eyes." Her eyes became soft and glowing, the emotion shining in her face.

Emma smiled at the affection that filled Astrid as she talked about him.

"I definitely like the part where we make up. He's got really nice lips."

"Astrid!"

"What?"

\*\*3HJHJHJHJ3\*\*

Jack wandered through the snow-covered streets humming the latest Easter Manuever's remix and visualizing steps to go with it. It wasn't long before he was at Astrid's convenience store. Her father was at the counter, though, and didn't look up from his magazine. Jack hurried over to the cooler section, his eyes on the small carton of eggs. As he quickened his pace, he didn't notice the lean, speeding figure running head on down the aisle towards him. They collided halfway, both crying out and falling with loud thuds to the ground. A bottle of whisky clattered over the tile and a large variety of sweets scattered all around the other person. Luckily, the thick glass of the whisky didn't shatter. Jack quickly bent down to help the person pick up their products.

"Sorry, man. I didn't see you, you came up so fast." Jack apologized, grinning ruefully as he handed over a package of bean jamâ€"filled cakes to the person. He stopped and stared, the package still clutched in his hand. The young man grabbed at the package and frowned when he didn't release it.

"Thanks, but can I have that back now?"

Jack barely noticed how badly the other's hand was shaking. He was too amazed by the face.

Jack seemed to be looking straight at himself. Big green eyes and spiky bleach white hair, the same mouth and chin, if it wasn't for the longer length of hair, he would've thought he was looking at a mirror.

"Yo-you look like me. Who are you?" Jack managed to force out of his dry mouth.

"Nightlight, and you?"

"Jackson Overland."

"Great, nice to meet you, doppleganger. I got to go now." The guy wrenched the desserts away from him and stood.

As he stood, he finally really noticed her. He was shaking from head to foot. His eyes were rimmed in red and had dark bags under them. He had more than enough clothes on, even if they were dirty and threadbare, so it couldn't have been the cold that made him shake. Though, he was painfully thin, so much that his clothes hung off him as if they were two sizes too big. His green eyes glared at Jack from a face that seemed older, and weary, but Nightlight couldn't have been much older than him.

"Stop staring, weirdo, and move," he snarled at him, his eyes getting edgy.

Jack moved to the side without a word and turned to watch her go. Who is he? Why does he look like me? Dopplegangers really exist? Aren't I suppose to explode, then? He frowned as he watched the guy lit up a cigarette as soon as he stepped outside. Is he sick?

He quickly shook his head to regain his senses and hurried to get the carton of eggs. He'd have to remember to tell Hiccup. He'd know what to make of it.

If anything, it'd be a cool story to tell.

**\*\*3HJHJHJHJ3\*\***

Emma and Astrid hurried up the steps towards the apartment.

"Where's Jay, Astrid?" Emma asked, suddenly realizing that the mysterious boyfriend hadn't appeared yet.

"He's already here! He sent me a text a while ago."

"He came here alone? Does he know Dimitri and Eret, then? You must go to the same school, then?"

"Oh, no! I found him in a park one day. We normally meet in the park instead of at one of our schools," Astrid explained with a grin. "He does know Dimitri, though. I think they might have met a few times, but they're not friends. But he's known Jack for a long time! He plays soccer, too!"

"He what?" Emma gasped. Her heart began beating really fast too fast. She hurried to run up the stairs to catch up with her hyperactive friend. "He plays soccer and knows my brother?"

"He calls him Jack Frost sometimes, like that guardian figure, isn't that cute? I think they look a little alike, too. If you give your brother brown hair. Oh no! I wanted it to be a surprise!" Astrid exclaimed, her eyes wide. She pouted at her slip. "Oh well," she shrugged and turned towards the door to knock.

"Jamie. Is his name Jamie Bennette?"

Astrid turned back with wide eyes at the tone in Emma's voice.

A small part of Emma's mind regretted the poison that dripped into her words; another part was immensely satisfied with the shock in

that blue gaze.

"Bennette? I don't know it might be. Why- wait a minute! You don't think?" Astrid gasped, clasping her hands over her mouth.

"Yes, I do," Emma all but seethed.

The door flew open. A tall, shapely brunette, whom Emma recognized to be Dimitri, was standing in front of them with a big grin.

"Merry Christmas!" Dimitri sang gaily.

Jim peeped behind his shoulder. "Fair warning, he's a sucker for Christmas."

" Rudolph, the red-nosed reindeer... "

They gasped as Emma pushed past her with a dark frown. Her eyes were almost the color of her brother's in her fury.

"Er, What's going on?"

"I told you to cool it with the lame carols."

"I highly doubt that's the reason."

"Emma, wait!" Astrid edged past her childhood friend and rushed into the foyer. Damndamndamn, she repeated stupidly.

Emma rushed through the house, the familiar laughter echoing in her ears as she neared the group of people. He grabbed the door jamb and swung herself through the open doorway into the room where his laughter was ringing. Her wide eyes took in Hiccup rising up from his seat in surprise, Aster seeming to have been breaking some moves and Jamie, with his hands outstretched, turning towards the door with dark eyes curious. He dropped his hands and smiled awkwardly at her, but it died quickly.

"Emma "

Emma felt her mouth tighten. She ignored the familiar looming presence that came up from behind her and marched into the room towards the sneaky bastard. Her hands rose almost of its own volition and swung through the air. The ringing slap that sounded through the room surprised even herself, but her face didn't show it. Her face only showed her anger, and hopefully, none of her pain.

"Emma!" Astrid's voice gasped.

"Eh? Ems!"

"E-Emma "

"How dare you? How dare you not tell her? How dare you not tell me? And I'm a liar? At least my lies were based on honor! Based on a promise! I would not have cared who you dated if only you had warned one of us! She's my friend and now now now." Her tears fell onto her cheeks before she could stop them. He took a step towards her. She quickly backed away into the solid chest of her older brother. A broken sob cracked through the room like her slap that had left that

large red mark on his dark face. Her fingers curled into fists to keep herself from reaching towards him in apology.

"I I didn't want her to know it was you." Jamie whispered. "I didn't want her to know I loved \_you\_."

Emma shook her head fiercely. "How could you be so selfish?" She whispered back.

"Ems, you both were hurt after that break-up. It was really bad," Jack tried to soothe her, but she shrugged him off.

"I DIDN'T WANT YOU BACK IN MY LIFE AND NOW YOU TOOK AWAY MY FRIEND!" Emma yelled at Jamie, making him flinch.

"Emma, please, I don't care. I still want to be your friend!" Astrid cried out.

Emma realized somewhere in the back of her mind that she was overreacting. She couldn't help it, no matter how she tried to stop. Words that Astrid had spoken; about her boyfriend, how he kissed and how he sweet he was, how much they fought and made up, how \_happy\_ and how much \_in love\_ she was with \_herâ€"Astrid'sâ€"herâ€"Astrid'sâ€"\_ Jamieâ€" those rang through Emma's mind and broke her heart.

"I can't know it's him that you love. I \_can't.\_ I won't be able to stand how happy you are " Her glittering amber eyes met Astrid's, trying to make her understand. "I can't take that away from you, either." Her eyes glanced back at his blackâ€"brown eyes, his pain-filled dark eyes. "I'm sorry I made such a scene. I know how hard you are trying." Her voice was so quiet did he even hear her?

But her feet were already carrying her away, making her run again, and again, and again, \_why couldn't she ever stop running?\_

Her shoes crunched on snow. Ice crystals snapped beneath her winter boots, old and faded with age. She didn't feel the bite of chill winter air at her gloveless hands. She could only feel her heart slowly beating in her chest and the tears streaming down her cheeks.

"I I didn't want anyone to see me cry," she whispered to herself, her breath white vapor before her lips.

"Not even your older brother?"

Emma spun around, her brown hair swinging around her face. He was standing just a few feet away with a small, fake smile on his face. It seemed wrong on him, like the colour pink or a shirt with the logo '\_I'm a Vegetarian\_.' She hadn't even heard him follow her.

"I don't even remember the last time you cried, Ems," Jack noted pointlessly as he walked forward.

She trembled slightly, wondering if she wanted the affection, but when he wrapped his arms around her, she fell into his embrace. It had been so long since she had leaned on anyone, for anything. She hadn't even let Eret in, not after that ridiculous display outside

her school that day, so long ago. She slowly put her arms around his waist, crying harder, letting her sobs be muffled by his shirt. He laid his chin on her head and closed his eyes. He realized with a small, self-mocking grin that the bag with the carton of eggs was still in his hand.

"Did you really have to break ties with Astrid because of a guy?"

Emma giggled wetly and sniffled.

"I didn't want to. It just happened so fast and he was just standing there looking at me. She had just been talking about how much they fought and made up and kissed and how happy she was. Jack, I couldn't stand it!" She rubbed her face into his parka, trying not to fall apart again.

"I guess I'd see why you'd be a little emotional. You acted a lot like me back there. Like you put your words before your head. I'd never seen you lose control like that," Jack muttered, sounding rather amazed.

"I feel so stupid," she murmured.

"Everyone gets a little emotional, Ems. It's okay."

She shook her head mutely. He tightened his hold around her and sighed. There was something he was supposed to tell Hiccup... but he couldn't remember what it was. Maybe it was the eggs? Whatever, Emma needed him more.

"Where are your gloves?" he asked suddenly as her cold hands wriggled under his parka.

"Where are yours?" she retorted, grinning a bit when he shivered.

"I don't have any."

"Well, then, where are mine, big bro?" Emma prompted, as if walking him through a math problem.

"You don't have any?" Jack guessed slowly.

"I love you, big bro," Emma laughed, snuggling closer. Just for that, Jack ignored her chilly hands.

Jack entered the apartment almost twenty minutes later. Eret ran up to him, his eyes worried.

"How is Emma?" he demanded immediately, before Jack had even gotten out of his shoes.

"Uh, yeah, she's—" Jack stuttered, awkwardly holding one foot and a bag of eggs in each hand.

"Why don't you call her Ems? Aren't you guys dating?" asked Jamie from the other room.

Hiccup placed his hand against his forehead and sighed. The silent tension between the Jamie, Astrid (honestly, he never thought she'd



go for someone younger than her) and Eret had been wearing on all of them as soon as Eret had appeared and been filled in on what had happened. Eret and Jamie's gaze met and clashed from across the hallway.

"We haven't known each other very long," Eret retorted.

Jamie tore his gaze away and looked to Jack, who was gaping at them. He'd never seen Jamie look so \_hostile\_.

"Yeesh, I thought this was a Christmas party." Dimitri muttered.

Jim nudged him. "Shut it, Dimwit."

"He's got a point, though." Anna muttered from the kitchen, trying to look busy with food preparation.

"Where is Emma, Jack?"

"Uh she went home. She didn't want to come back. I think she forgot you," Jack answered, bemused.

Hiccup sighed again at his boyfriend tactlessness. "Jack, you idiot."

Astrid and Jamie snorted audibly. Despite Emma's reaction to her newest relationship, Astrid seemed to dislike Eret more than she despaired over Emma. Hopefully, their relationship could be repaired in the future. Eret being put down a peg was always amusing, though.

"I'm sure she didn't mean to, Eret. She had a terrible shock recently, as we told you," Hiccup reminded him gently as Eret frowned at Jack.

Astrid paled and Jamie crossed his arms, staring down at the floor. Eret smiled at Hiccup gratefully and nodded to Jack.

"I'm going to go to your house, if it's all right, Jack," Eret told him.

"Yeah, go ahead. Just don't talk much," Jack warned with an uneasy smile.

"Yeah. I know." With that, he was gone.

"Um Jack how about them eggs?" Cristoff piped up with forced cheer.

"Yeah, let's get this Christmas party started," Aster announced with a little less verve than usual.

Later on that night, Hiccup turned down his sheets slowly. He was absolutely exhausted. Astrid and Jamie had become more outrageous the later it got, singing loudly to every Christmas carol with Dimitri and fighting over slices of cake, only to laugh at each other moments later. Jim got a headache. Jack only exacerbated matters, devolving from a seventeen-year-old young adult to a kid as he romped around with his "\_protÃ©gÃ©\_." Anna and Cristoff were playing hostess and host, which meant things got spilled over the floor and counters and

Toothless licked the crumbs and spilled drinks off. Aster and Elsa disappeared into his room after she opened her Christmas gift- which was a silver necklace with a flat disk inscribed with \_'My Snow Princess'\_.

Hiccup couldn't help but think that people could be so corny and ridiculous. It also meant they weren't there to help keep others in line.

Jim was probably the only one that didn't cause problems. Instead, to Hiccup's delight, he helped him pick up after everybody.

Near the end of the night, as everybody began to leave, Hiccup got strangely quiet, off in his own space thinking really hard about something and frowning. Jack fell into the couch with a sigh. The door from Hiccup's room creaked open he looked over as Hiccup came out, Toothless by his side. A smudge of toothpaste was on his cheek and his hands were behind his back.

"What is it, Hic?" Jack asked, a small smile on his face at how adorable his boyfriend looked right at that moment.

"I got a gift for you."

"Oh, really?! Thank you!" Jack sat up excitedly, blushing. He took the small bag Hiccup handed him and peeked inside.

"Do Do you like it?"

It was a rectangular picture frame; a plain petrified wood frame with the words \_'My Family\_' carved into the top and filled in with silver.

"How... Why... Hic..."

"It's for your picture of your parents. Your frame looks so old. I wanted to get you a new one. I guess I can get a gift for you, eh?"

"Yeah!" Jack threw his arms around Hiccup's waist and lifted him off the floor, grinning widely and making Hiccup laugh.

"I'm glad I made someone happy." Hiccup wrapped his arms around Jack's neck and pressed his cheek against his white hair.

\_Something was still bugging Jack, though. \_\_What the hell am I forgetting?\_

\_\*\*Author's Note: hope you enjoyed that.\*\*\_

End  
file.